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ABSTRACT

Among the articles by Sam Brightman collected in this volume from the newsletter, "Adult & Continuing Education Today (ACET)" are the following: "Grown-Ups Ought to Know Better"; "Adult Education: The Only Sure Factor Is Growth"; "Adult Education Important in This Election Year"; "Will Nursery School External Degree Programs Come Next?"; "Continuing Education in Political Science at Miami Beach"; "Harry S. Truman: A Lifelong Learner"; "If Everybody Has a Career, Who Will Do the Work"; "Some Downers from the Mailbag"; "A Worm's Eye Report on Getting Think Tanked"; "Continuing Education Offers a Smorgasbord of Fun and Learning"; "A Self-Planned Learning Experience"; "Is U.S. Entitling Itself to Bankruptcy?"; "Republicans Hostile to Federal Aid to Education"; "Carter Transition Team Studies Education"; "Maybe There's an Interface--You Should Excuse the Expression--Between Reading and Writing"; "Good News--Sort of--From Jossey-Bass and Playboy"; "Higher Educators Are 'Anticipating the Challenge of Lifelong Learning'"; "Foes of Mandatory Continuing Education Meet"; "A Bridge to the New Decade"; "Knowles Describes New Decade in Keynote"; "The Role of Adult Education in Community Education"; "Dear Mr. Stewart"; "The New Education Department"; "AEA [Adult Education Association] Criticizes Adult Learning Setup in New Department"; "Should the National Football League Become the Role Model for American Society?"; "Wingspread Conference Discusses Learning Programs to Help the Aged"; "If the Shoe Fits, Cut Off Your Foot"; "Lifelong Learning"; "Some Questions for 1983 and Beyond"; "The Democratic Platform"; "Ring Out the Old, Ring in the New"; "CAEO [Coalition of Adult Education Associations] Holds Last Show-and-Tell of 1984"; "Full Moon Time in Washington"; "Education Department Isn't Getting All of the Crazies"; "Another Education Reform Ignores Adult Education"; "Pick Your Caption"; "Sam Brightman's Milwaukee"; "Dick, Jane Are Yuppies But Spot Is Dead!"; "Show and Tell at the CAEO"; "Why Isn't Illiteracy as Profitable to Adult Educators as Sin Is to Preachers?"; "Revisiting a Success Story in Adult Education"; "What Every Course Marketer Should Know about Old Folks"; "National Center of Adult Learning Established"; "Service Bill Gets Educator's Attention"; "Decline and Fall of the Information Society"; "Proprietary Schools under Fire"; "Myles Horton Lived His Beliefs"; "Parents Need Adult Education"; "Retiring Rep Hawkins in Education Fight"; "Learners: Customers or Clients?"; "Commission Urges Testing Reforms"; "Comments about Learners' 'Rights'"; "Can the Free Safety Save the Day"; "In Defense of Anecdotal Evidence"; "Recession a Boost to Adult Enrollment"; "Are We Thinking for Ourselves?"; "Beautiful Dreams, Nightmare Reality"; and "Class Warfare." (YLB)

Grown-ups Ought to Know Better

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Samuel C. Brightman

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To Hulda Knowles and Lucy Brightman, Sam's biggest fans.

Sam Brightman (1911-1992) was a pioneer in the field of adult education whose journalism and observations made him the Edward R. Murrow of adult education.

Samuel Charles Brightman was born and reared in Missouri, earning degrees in liberal arts from Washington University and in journalism from the University of Missouri. He had the distinction of editing humor magazines at both universities.

He worked as a journalist on the St. Louis Star-Times, the St. Louis Post Dispatch radio station, the Cincinnati Post, and the Louisville Courier-Journal. There he covered education, politics and government.

In 1941 he became the Courier-Journal's Washington correspondent, where he witnessed and wrote about the nation's reaction to the bombing of Pearl Harbor and entry into World War II.

In 1942 Brightman enlisted in the army and went to Officer Candidate School. Then, stationed in London, he volunteered for duty in the Normandy Invasion of Europe and was in charge of news coverage for the lst Army, landing at Omaha Beach on D-Day. His dispatches were the first news received from the front. He moved East with the troops and members of the press, arriving on liberation day in Paris. Sam's funnybone never failed him—of the many anecdotes he recounted, one was quoted in "Is Paris Burning?"

He was executive officer of the public relations detachment for the Allied Forces and led the press convoy into Berlin on the day of its occupation. He enjoyed pointing out, as evidence of the photojournalists' high regard for him, the photograph where he is obviously being jostled during the ceremony honoring General Eisenhower, taking place at the European Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. He remained on duty in Europe through the Potsdam Conference.

Brightman began his affiliation with the Democratic National Committee as associate director of publicity in 1947, becoming director of publicity and then deputy chairman for public affairs. He was Managing Editor, then Editor of the Democratic Digest, published during the Fifties. It was the only political periodical ever successfully sold on newsstands nationwide.

In 1965 he left the Democratic National Committee to return to independent public relations and journalism. He covered elections for the three major television networks from 1966 through 1976.

In 1971 Brightman became editor of Adult and Continuing Education Today (ACET), a newsletter covering the field of adult learning. The newsletter began in Washington D.C. by Today Publications and News Service, Lester Barrer Publisher. He continued as its editor when it was purchased by Scott, Foresman and Co., and later acquired by the Learning Resources Network (LERN).

In 1985 he became Editor Emeritus and National Correspondent and continued writing for ACET until his death in 1992 at the age of 80.

Brightman also was a consultant to the National Council of Senior Citizens, and was active in promoting the Coalition of Adult Education Organizations (CAEO), serving on its Board of Directors. He also supported and participated in the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education (AAACE).

He was honored at a luncheon at the National Adult Education Conference in 1985 in Milwaukee, hosted by the "Former Friends of Sam Brightman," and at a CAEO luncheon in 1991.

In 1947 he married the former Lucy Kirk Cleaver. They had four children and resided in Bethesda, Maryland. In 1989 he became a proud grandfather.

His life at the time of his death was celebrated at a memorial service on February 8, 1992, and the inurnment ceremony with full military honors was held on May 11, 1992 at the Columbarium in Arlington National Cemetery.

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We once received a letter from a reader of our newsletter, "Adult & Continuing Education Today (ACET)," who said that the editor Sam Brightman must be a composite of writers because the columns were so insightful, entertaining, witty and profound. The name "Bright-man" only added to his suspicions.

Samuel C. Brightman, or Sam, was the editor of "Adult & Continuing Education Today," from 1971-1991. During those years the newsletter was the foremost reporter of the exciting growth in the field of adult learning. And Sam, a career journalist with a love for lifelong learning, became the Edward R. Murrow of adult education.

The following are a collection of articles written by Sam for ACET. They were selected by his fellow contributors to ACET, whom Sam fondly referred to as the "former friends of Sam Brightman."

They are: lifelong learning journalist and independent scholar Ron Gross; consultant and higher education authority David Stewart; adult education philosopher and social critic, John Ohliger; and LERN president and ACET publisher William A. Draves.

A word of caution for some readers. Sam never said a hurtful word or denigrated any person or group of people in his writings. He often poked fun at just about everyone, however, with those he admired and respected receiving the most poking.

There are at least three reasons why these period writings remain valuable and worth reading:

1. This collection represents a firsthand account and the most comprehensive history of a period in adult education that shaped the form of lifelong learning in our country in the 21st century.
2. Many of the issues Sam wrote about are still important concerns. His thoughts on the central issues of the day give us ample pause and insight.
3. Sam Brightman was an unparalleled and unequaled journalist whose mastery of the genre may never be replicated. Enjoy his wit, humor and style. It is truly remarkable journalism.

GROWN-UPS OUGHT TO KNOW BETTER

(MARCH 1982)

Enthusiastic adult educators from Pennsylvania gathered at the Hershey Lodge and Convention Center in February for the 17th annual Pennsylvania Adult Education Mid-Winter Conference. Speakers and discussion groups addressed the conference theme, "Rise to the Challenge."

The banquet speaker, Samuel C. Brightman, editor of *ACET*, spoke on his usual topic, "Grown-ups Ought to Know Better." In a wide-ranging talk interspersed with his personal biases and prejudices, the speaker (1) questioned the value of TV as a constructive educational force, (2) suggested hopefully that computers might soon be afflicted with information grid lock, and (3) compared processed information with the processed pork known to veterans of WW II as Spam.

After giving a personal account of life in 1928, and urging that President Reagan's invitations to go back to that year be declined, Brightman returned reluctantly to the present, as follows:

I have been telling you the story of a lifelong learner. Virtually all of my adult life has been spent as a journalist or politician. Both trades require continuing education. You have to keep learning a little bit about a lot of things to survive in either trade.

It was mainly the things I learned after I left the classroom that enabled me to be an active citizen. Every year you have to know more...to earn a living and be an active citizen. You have to earn a living and you have to be an active citizen if you want to live a

decent life in a decent society. Every one of us should work at learning to be a good citizen. How many of us play hookey?

If we're going to be a decent democracy in 1982, we have to find some way to help citizens twenty years out of the classroom to know enough to be good citizens in a country and a world with the problems of 1982, not the problems of 1928. There is some urgency about this.

I think that the leadership to make us truly a learning society must come mostly from outside the ranks of professional educators. Too many adults, lazy and heedless of what was offered in the classroom, tend somehow to blame our own learning deficiencies upon our tutors. We say that the professors did not tell us how it would be in the real world. Sometimes they were telling us something more important—how it should be! And sometimes we were not listening. But that is beside my point. My point is that we tend to beware of educators bearing education.

Political and civic leaders are failing us greviously. Too many are saying, in effect, "Watch TV, play golf, enjoy television, pay taxes, and we will do the learning and the thinking and deciding for you." Many of us accept this proposition—we, whose ancestors fought and bled to retain the right to study, to learn, to think, to decide for themselves.

Because I keep insisting that grown-ups ought to know better, some will tell you that I am an eccentric, and not a well-educated, well-informed, articulate eccentric at that. I plead guilty. I plead guilty to bringing you an untidy, boundless problem—and no tidy solution.

I have ghostwritten in my time literally hundreds of thundering perorations. I have said that whatever the topic was, it was both a challenge and an opportunity. But I shall end this train of thought on a quiet note. Adult educators can and should do more to meet the need I have described—the need for grown-ups to know better. That is your challenge and opportunity.

If Everybody Has a Career, Who Will Do the Work?

PART I

1971 - 1979

HOORAY! WORM TURNS AND MAN BITES DOG!

(AUGUST 14, 1971)

For the last year or so you could walk into the periodical room of any good library blindfolded and pick up a publication which would contain an erudite and eloquent exposition by a teenager on how the rotten, repressive, regimented education system had fossilized his mind and broken his spirit. It seemed that we had bred a generation of Americans so high-strung that it could not stand even a few minutes of confinement in classroom and which found the old shibboleths that students should study and teachers should teach hopelessly irrelevant and outdated.

In case there were some teachers around who thought there still might be a useful place in American society for the textbook and classroom, there weren't any magazines or book publishers who would print a rebuttal to the new wisdom of the alienated pupil.

Well now, a young English instructor at the University of Missouri has stated the teacher's side of the case, stated it well, and found his remarks reprinted on the prestigious Op-Ed page of *The New York Times*. They appeared on July 22 and you should be able to find a copy at your library. Henry F. Ottinger, an English instructor and doctoral candidate who fell under the influence of Farber's *The Student as Nigger* and sought to conduct a composition class without rules or assignments. What happened? Ottinger recounted it this way in his farewell to the class:

"Generally, this class has been the most silent, reticent,

paranoid bunch of people in a group I have ever encountered. You had an opportunity to exchange ideas (which, it often turned out, 'you have not got'), and you were too embarrassed to do so.

"You had an opportunity to find out something about yourselves. This, by the way, is the crux of education. And as far as I can see, you found out very little.

"You had an opportunity to explore ideas—on your own—and didn't. Most of the papers hashed over the usual cliche-ridden topics.

"Most of all, you had the opportunity to be free—to be responsible to yourselves—and you succeeded in proving to me and to yourselves that freedom is slavery, a line from 1984 which I hope, for the sake of all of us, isn't prophetic.

"Why did the class fail?

"It failed because thinking causes pain. And, like good little utilitarians, you want to avoid pain. It's so much easier to come up with instant esthetics, instant solutions, instant salvation, instant thoughts. After all, instant things, like breakfasts and TV dinners, are easily digestible—and easily regurgitated—and not terribly nourishing.

"One of the most nauseating remarks I have heard this semester is, 'Gosh, college is no fun,' or, when an idea is presented, 'It doesn't turn me on.'

"If you don't believe that knowledge for its own sake is a valid and valuable goal, then you're in the wrong place."

All this may be a long jump from adult basic education, but we always enjoy seeing a worm turn or a man bit dog, and it gave us a lift during the dog days of summer to read about a teacher telling it like it is to his students.

Adult Education: The Only Sure Factor is Growth

(October 4, 1971)

"Adult education's main role is to try to make up for other people's mistakes. Someone gets through 12 years of primary and secondary schools without a useful skill to contribute to society and adult education is supposed to fix that up in a few months. Someone else gets through four or five years of higher education without any employable skills so they call in adult education. The secondary schools turn off teenagers and they drop out and take to the streets. Another job for adult education! Economic pressure squeezes young people out of school before they acquire the level of education they should (and can) reach. Well, there's adult education, so why worry? No glamour, no exciting breakthroughs, no big grants from Uncle Sam and the foundations just plug away at correcting other people's mistakes."

That's one view, and a bitter one, but it finds support from anyone who has looked at the smorgasbord of subjects offered in the fall catalogues. This year's curricula certainly reflect changes in society. What does lie ahead for adult education? Some lively years, certainly.

While no one thinks that adult educators are suddenly going to become the beautiful people of the knowledge industry, adult education seems bound to grow larger in numbers and to assume a larger part of the burden of providing people with the skills to raise our material standard of living and raise our societal

standard of living. Adult education now serves three main groups of students: (1) persons seeking new job skills to expand or upgrade skills they already possess; (2) persons who cannot attend school full-time but who desire a degree (including women whose education was interrupted by motherhood); (3) people who are taking courses for the sake of learning. What about these groups in future years?

Job skills, whether they are mechanical and technical or in such areas as communications and education, will become more necessary and more sophisticated. The number of those who cannot carry a full-time load but want a degree could decrease if a trend toward skipping college for quicker career training catches on, but they could increase if the middle class dropouts from classroom and society were to decide to drop back into the middle class. If more and more young people opt for the short career training, particularly at the expense of the liberal arts, there may be an increase in those who study later on for the pleasure of learning.

Adult Education Important in This Election Year

(March 6, 1972)

A political observer has remarked, "If adult education were doing its job in politics and public affairs, all of our Presidents would be Lincoln and Roosevelts and Wilsons. Even if the electorate couldn't find a person with their skills, wisdom and leadership abilities, the electorate would be so smart that it would make any President look like a genius."

The happy state of affairs described in this jest is nowhere near, but in fact our society does rely rather heavily on adult education (stretched to include the communications media and a variety of organizations in addition to the formal structure of education) to make our democracy work.

The campaigning this year is a tangled mixture of propaganda and educational material which causes a good many adults to learn some things about their government, and to give some thought to public affairs, which they would not do except for excitement of the Presidential race.

It might be assumed that the students in classrooms who are still too young to vote would be learning something about the nominating and election process, but a casual colloquy with groups of high school students hints that they are no better informed than those who are eligible to vote—and that is not very well informed.

There is a substantial amount of out-of-school effort to educate prospective voters by the political parties, organized

labor and such organizations as the League of Women Voters.

Lowering the voting age has created a new need for special educational efforts of this sort; and the entire new set of rules by which the Democrats are selecting their convention delegates creates another need for a massive adult education effort.

Since participants in adult and continuing education of all kinds frequently tend to be less passive than the norm, a good many of them would probably respond to reminders by their instructors of the importance of political participation.

From time to time we will mention material which is available both for general use and for use in classes in government, sociology and other subjects closely allied to politics and political science.

At the moment, information on how to participate in the selection of delegates to the two conventions is probably as topical as anything you might wish to use. Republican supporters of President Nixon should know how to support him and those who support Representatives Ashbrook and McCloskey also need this information. More important, in addition to a record-breaking gaggle of candidates for nomination, the Democrats have a brand new set of rules, different in each state, covering the delegate selection process.

The Republican and Democratic national committees and each state committee all have information available about the delegate selection process in every state. At this time, the Democratic fact sheets, because of the extensive reforms undertaken this year by that party, are more comprehensive. Common Cause, the self-styled "People's Lobby," has an excellent summary of the process in both parties on a state-by-state basis. The addresses: Republican National Committee, 301 First Street, SE., Washington, DC 20003; Democratic National Committee, 2600 Virginia Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20037; Common Cause, 2100 M Street, NW Washington, DC 20037.

Will Nursery School External Degree Programs Come Next?

(April 3, 1972)

Assuming that the readers and staff of this publication share the commonality of adulthood, it is painful to report that another goody has come into existence too late for us. The most unpleasant memory we have of our secondary education was the fact that we were supposed to transport ourself by ambulatory methods the considerable distance from our residence to the Soldan High School in St. Louis. This compulsory walking system was in effect regardless of rain, snow, hail, sleet or the gloom of St. Louis' notorious soft coal smog.

But Ford has found a better way—The Ford Foundation, that is. It has shelled out $73,351 to the Syracuse University Research Corporation to explore an "external degree" program for teenagers in five New York State counties. The questions all this raises baffle and boggle the mind. Years ago, the lady of our house found that compulsory car-pooling the young ones to nursery school was worth it to get them out from under foot for a few hours. Are the parents of America now ready to have their teenagers sitting around the house all day rattling the windows with stereo music and reading *Rolling Stone* as they carry on their external degree education? It is hard to blame secondary school teachers for wanting to get the children out of the classroom and back into the living room, but what about the social cost to others? As it is now, the teenagers drive only a well-paid minority (teachers) up the wall during, what used to

be called, classroom hours. But there aren't enough psychiatrists in the country to provide therapy for the housewives who will go bananas if Ford's Folly of taking high school out of the classroom and putting it into the living room is not stopped. The most useful contribution we make to domestic tranquility is to drive our teenagers, and any strays we see en route, to the Walt Whitman high school on days when they miss the bus. Please, Ford Foundation, say it isn't so! Change your mind before it's too late!

Continuing Education in Political Science at Miami Beach

(July 24, 1972)

Miami Beach Convention Hall—Political conventions are about the biggest single effort in adult education conducted by nonacademic personnel in the world. Advocates of a variety of causes and courses of action seek to educate the members of the platform committee and finally the delegates to the convention to their point of view. The communications media, print and electronic, spend millions to depict the event and to analyze and explain what is taking place as citizens from all walks of life meet, exchange their views, argue and finally adopt a program for their party in the months ahead. Political platforms, despite the many jokes that are made about them, are serious business. The fact is that thousands of man hours go into their preparation and that votes are decided, a substantial number of votes, by what is in the platform.

The session of the Democratic Convention which debated and adopted a platform was probably the longest night school class in history, beginning as the sun faded below the mainland across Biscayne Bay and ending well after the sun climbed into view over the gray waves of the Atlantic. From this long night and the months of work and the long days of hearings which preceded it came a document that is sometimes specific, sometimes vague but which taken in its total calls for a peaceful revolution in American life.

The section on education runs to seven pages, and little of this

affects adult and continuing education beyond the effect of new financing programs for public education. Curiously enough, the frontispiece of the section on education is a quotation from Gov. Jimmy Carter of Georgia at a platform hearing held in Atlanta on June 7 which is addressed tangentially to busing. It reads: "The American people want overwhelmingly to give to our children and adults equitable educational opportunities of the highest possible quality, not predicated on race, not predicated on past social accomplishment or wealth, except in a compensatory way to those who have been deprived in the past."

Adults also get mentioned in a section on career education which calls for "a lifetime system of continuing education to enhance career mobility, both vertically and laterally, so that the career choice made at 18 or 20 years of age does not have to be the only or final choice."

Another section on higher education promises to "develop broad opportunities for lifelong learning, including encouragement for post-secondary education throughout adult years and permit 'stopping-off' during higher education." This reporter has paid a good deal of attention to the platform hearings and the debate at the convention in preparation for a book on the subject and he is inclined to suspect that the failure of adult and continuing education to achieve more attention is due to its lack of organization, its failure to develop an articulate and forceful spokesman for adult and continuing education as a special discipline and as a vital force in American life.

The platform looks to a problem which clearly calls for a strong thrust of growth in adult education but approaches it pretty much along the lines of what must be done by sequential classroom education of the young. The platform states: "America in the 1970s requires something the world has never seen: Masses of educated people—educated to feel and to act, as well as to think. The children who enter school next fall still will be in the labor force in the year 2030; we cannot even imagine what American society will be like then, let alone what specific jobs they may hold. For them, education must be done by teaching them how to learn, how to apply man's wisdom to new problems as they arise and how to recognize new problems as they arise.

Education must prepare students not just to earn a living but to live a life—a creative, humane and sensitive life."

We had supposed that formal elementary, secondary and higher education included these efforts among its goals and that one of the purposes, and major accomplishments of adult and continuing education was to attempt to do these things for adults who had missed them because they had dropped out of school or had been badly taught when they are in school. In any event it is a fact that adult and continuing education did not get much attention in the Democratic platform and, whether it be fact or opinion or an admixture, there is strong evidence that we who are involved in continuing education must assume some of the blame for not putting on the same pressure that members of other parts of the educational complex applied to the platform drafters. It may be that some of us in adult education could stand a little continuing education in political advocacy, or lobbying, as the less elegant describe it. To obtain a copy of the Democratic platform write to Democratic National Committee, 2600 Virginia Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20037.

HARRY S. TRUMAN: A LIFELONG LEARNER

(JANUARY 22, 1973)

Harry S. Truman was probably the last man without a college degree to be elected President. He was also the last President, I suspect, to have been born in a county where my father was superintendent of schools in a town where people went down to the barber shop to watch the haircuts. I used to visit a favorite uncle who lived in Independence in an old barn of a house reminiscent of the Victorian structure you saw on TV during the coverage of Mr. Truman's last rites. I mention this so you will know I am prejudiced and that the revisionist historians will have uphill going in their efforts to persuade me that the 33rd president was an evil and ignorant man.

I would like to suggest that the career of Mr. Truman indicates that he had the good fortune to run for office in an era when academics wrote little about the virtues of lifelong learning but when the public was more willing than it is now to accept lifelong learning as a qualification for a responsible public position. Mr. Truman was painfully honest about his lack of formal education. In *Who's Who* he listed his two years of night school law courses along with such positions as timekeeper for a railroad labor gang—his modest positions in his younger years are detailed more specifically than his activities as a Senator and as President. Yet he was proud of his self-taught knowledge of history. (During the period when I attended his pre-press conference skill sessions I was sometimes surprised at snippets of historical information

and insights on the past which popped up as he prepared for a wide range of questions on sensitive matters. I suspect that a press conference might be as much of a test of a man's grasp of information and understanding of societal forces as the oral examination for a Ph.D.)

One of the sequences on TV after Mr. Truman's death showed him answering the questions of children in a classroom and everybody was enjoying the experience. I suspect that Mr. Truman had something of the frustrated teacher in him. Certainly he regarded the education of the electorate as one of the major duties of the chief executive and despite his unabashed partisanship he put a good deal of solid fact into his presidential addresses. Unlike many self-educated men, he never seemed to display an aggressive feeling that the school of hard knocks provides a better education than the classroom. His preoccupation with the Truman Library was concerned basically with the resources it would provide for academic scholars, not merely for a desire for a handsome building to bear his name. In an effort to refresh my memory about Mr. Truman before my mind was lulled by the eulogies of recent weeks, I looked up the transcripts of tapes I recorded for the Truman Library. There are several references to his ability to communicate and to the surprising depth of his knowledge for someone with little formal education by modern standards. There is one sentence, when I am discussing the variety of backgrounds of persons who participated in our political process, in which I get to the point about lifetime learning. "We get a Mr. Truman, a Governor Lawrence (of Pennsylvania), who are short of formal education, long on ability to learn and accomplish things."

No question in my mind, the opportunity for lifelong learning is much greater now than it was during Mr. Truman's learning span, but I have grave doubts that it is as acceptable a credential for public office as it used to be. Which saddens me, but as I said at the start, I am a prejudiced witness.

If Everybody Has A Career, Who Will Do The Work

(April 29, 1974)

All of the things your editor didn't want to know about Career Education (not to be confused with small letter career education) but were afraid someone would tell him is provided in a special section on the subject in *School Review*. One who has spent 16 years in the classroom without achieving an education and four decades in what is cutely termed the "world of work" without achieving a career, which is the editor's track record, should be expected to welcome a dandy new scheme which grabs you on your way out of nursery school and guides you surely to a Career. But from the moment it was unveiled by the office of Education, Career Education, with its capital letters and broad and vague promises, aroused some latent individuality that I didn't realize was left and caused me to be thankful that Career Education had not been invented when I was young and impressionable. At one point I dropped out of school and went to work in a shoe factory. I probably achieved more peer esteem at the shoe factory than at any other point in my life, so I guess that is where efficient Career Education would have placed me, had it been in effect back in those days. However, I dropped out of the shoe industry and returned to the classroom. Lacking the guidance of Career Education, I enrolled in a college of Liberal Arts, where I wasted a lot of time, career-wise. The trouble is that I am reasonably content that all of these mistakes occurred, that I was not pegged where I belonged in the shoe factory, that I sniffed a few flowers

at the side of the road on my way to becoming a journeyman writer. What frightens me about Career Education is that it seems destined to strip away all educational detours and dallying in these courses. If so, shouldn't we be questioning some of the assumptions about Career Education? Most of us have seen a good many examples of people changing jobs and changing careers during adulthood without benefit of adult Career Education. Even so adult Career Education might seem to be a more pressing need than Career Education in the third grade. There is some evidence that this need is being recognized and that more may be done in this area. The article in *School Review* that grabbed the editor the most was by T.H. Fitzgerald of Ann Arbor which bore the nonpejorative title, "Career Education: An Error Whose Time Has Come." Fitzgerald suggests that one of the reasons a lot of people are not working is not that there is a lack of job training or Career Education, but that there is a shortage of jobs and careers. He lists such jobs as cleaning up motel rooms, picking crops, filing papers, editing education journals and other drudgery jobs that require no special skills and asks: "...if everyone insists on a `career,' who will do this work." Particularly worth quoting is this passage:

The most noteworthy feature of career education is not that it can misguide the young and their parents (at considerable public cost), but that it is an uninspiring, not to say defeatist, philosophy of education. Probably not one sits around USOE offices with feet on the desk, reading Plato or Maritain or Hutchins or even Dewey, especially these days when so much earnest talk is in the air there on the greater good of work. No use, then, to talk to them about the need to nurture the human spirit, about the discipline and power of mind, the critical function of intelligence, the wisdom of moral law, the ambiguities of freedom and responsibility, or knowledge as the guided discovery of world and self. One suspects most of that was put away once prelims were finished. Anyway, where is there a Ministry of Education which is a community of scholars instead of busy, practical administrators? But even for the latter, the new proposals will be wasted effort. As Charles Silberman pointed out in his report to the Carnegie Corporation:

For children who may still be in the labor force in the year 2030, nothing could be more wildly impractical than an education designed to prepare them for specific vocations or professions or to facilitate their adjustment to the world as it is. To be "practical" an education should prepare them for work that does not yet exist, and whose nature cannot even be imagined. This can only be done by teaching them how to learn, by giving them the kind of intellectual discipline that will enable them to apply man's accumulated wisdom to new problems as they arise—the kind of wisdom that will enable them to recognize new problems as they arise.

This would seem to indicate that whether it be called job training, Career Education, skills refreshment, or whatever, some kind of career help for adults is what is going to be required more than a massive expenditure of time and money in the K-12 span. You can get the special issue of *School Review* on Career Education from *School Review*, University of Chicago Press, 11030 Langley Ave., Chicago, IL 60628. Price is $3.75 for institutions, $3 for individuals. If you have read the prejudicial essay which preceded this, in fairness to Career Education, Fitzgerald and yourself, you should read the entire package.

SOME DOWNERS FROM THE MAILBAG

(AUGUST 5, 1974)

The mailbags haven't been bursting with jollity in recent weeks. Dr. Ted Guffy of Southwestern State College sent in an article based on a study of Senior Citizens. We don't have space for all of it, but Dr. Guffy's address is Weatherford, OK 73096, if you want the full text. Anyhow, to cheer up this elderly reader, Dr. Guffy gets right to the point in the first paragraph: "There was a time, during the early years of American society, when the senior citizens of a community were held in high esteem. However, as American society became more pragmatic and technically oriented, and as life expectancy increased, there was a corresponding increase in the numbers of senior citizens and they were relegated to roles of nonproductivity and insignificance...senior citizens became a burden on society." So if I don't have enough burdens on my conscience for being a burden on society, there's a report on Indians which tells me that the average education level of all Indians under Federal supervision is five school years. And there was a report from the Department of Labor about a conference. In a way it is the perfect report for any research activity because it provides absolutely zero useful information but gets in a plug for new grants for new research. Like the research that has done so much for old folks and Indians, maybe. So here is the paragraph. Clip and save it. You will be able to apply it to almost everything and people will probably hail you for what I keep hearing called

"new innovation."

The report outlines the need for a new approach to research, and introduces the need for creation of a new facilitator role to accomplish the mission of research utilization. It suggests approaches to peer level information exchanges, and a two-way communications process, up and down the line. It discusses the need for increasing local initiative and innovation and recommends future directions for staff development and training.

Hey, that isn't something I made up. It's for real. Write U.S. Department of Labor, Manpower Administration, Washington, DC 20210, and ask the Office of Research and Development for Summaries of R & D Reports No. 13.

A Worm's Eye Report on Getting Think Tanked

(August 5, 1974)

This reporter--old, crotchety, scarred by the past, baffled by the present, frightened of the future—enjoyed his visits to the National Adult Education Think Tank. The Term "Think Tank" turns him off like a faucet with a new washer—he has been to far too many "Think Tanks" where buttoned-up, buttoned-down types whisked him through a multi-media trip that contained about as much learning experience as the Sominex commercials. The glossy Holiday Inn decor of the Adult Education Center at the University of Maryland was about the only thing similar to these other Think Tanks in the process whereby Gerry Hanberry pushed and pulled a mixed bag of people and educators through two weeks of argument and discussion. The most visible pedagogues were the kind of folks who call their therapist a "stretch" instead of a "shrink" but the belief here is that they came up with more than cute phrases, although it remains to be seen whether the final product can be packaged and distributed. This reporter's first stop at the Think Tank was in the Organic Resources Room which had a videotape system, posters, books, graffiti, a surfeit of material and appliances that recalled the late Senator Barkley's description of the dilemma of the "blind dog in the meat house." If you like this poster, "Don't walk in front of me—I may not follow. Don't walk behind me—I may not lead. Walk beside me—and just be my friend," you would like the Organic Resources Room. The last stop at the Think Tank was

the final, public session, where, unfortunately there was darn little public. Hanberry and Paul Delker, Director of the Division of Adult Education of the Office of Education, presided. Since there had been a conference ban on the term "number one" (the other verboten was "expert"), Work Groups Two, Three, Four and Five presented their views of alternative futures for adult education. Community Self-Directed Learning was reported in a skit where the presiding officer was Mr. Gerry Thinktanker and participants were Mr. Fred Bureau, Prof. B.S. Factor, and Joe Grassroots. Despite the heavy-handed nomenclature, the skit was funny and provocative and got us eventually to 1994 where advocate-counsellors were running adult education via Life Long Learning Centers. There isn't room here to give a full report of the final meeting. Its Declaration of Interdependence, a statement of visions and compelling questions for the future, is printed in small type below to give you some feel of the deliberations. Someone asked me if the Think Tank thinkers paid much attention to the problem of letting the adult education customer design the product. I was able to borrow my response from that of the youngster from my native rural Missouri birthplace who was asked by a patronizing professor at the University, "Young man where you come from do they know about Post Hoc Ergo Propter Hoc?" The reply was, "Sir, they talk of little else."

You can get a lot of written material from the Think Tank and a list of participants. Talking to one of these is recommended along with a reading of the materials. Write Dr. Gerry C. Hanberry, National Adult Education Think Tank, University of Maryland, College Park, MD 20742, (301) 454-5481.

Dog Days Notes from All Over

(August 19, 1974)

With the thermometer in the 90s and a stickiness quotient of mucilage, these are certainly the Dog Days for people in the nation's capital, and a certain grumpiness on the part of the editor's golden retriever indicates that it may also be People Days for dogs. Anyhow, the dogs are still ahead. In the U.S. we can't find enough money to teach adults to read, but in South Africa the *Farmer's Weekly* runs an ad which reads, "Dogs trained—by correspondence." In Sweden, police dogs fly around in helicopters and then probably broadcast better traffic reports than have come to us from humans recently. Over in West Germany they had a World Canine Congress and dogs were told they had to act as "security factors" for humans who were alienated from modern society. Not even the shrinks are nutty enough to suggest a vice versa. A used car dealer in Florida was chased up a gas pump by his own watch dog who showed more wisdom than most car dealer's customers. When a blind person graduated from Trinity College in Hartford they gave his guide dog an honorary degree. When my retriever graduated all I got was a bill. Progress! A store on Fifth Avenue in New York that has a watering trough outside for dogs says it gets thank you notes from dogs. That figures, because even in New York bystanders might stare at a human drinking out of a dog fountain on Fifth Avenue. This publication has received at least 50 reasons why states cannot get together to carry on joint adult education research and training

projects with the $10 million that is going to be taken from the Office of Education and given to the states, but *The New York Times* reports that states all over the country are forming consortia to train veterinary doctors because dogs are getting fed up with inadequate medical care. In some suburbs, *The Times* reports, veterinary fees are about the same as those of the people doctors in the area so you figure out whether these are Dog Days or People Days.

Years ago schooling for dogs was basically a form of behavior modification. The thrust of this training was to force dogs to conform to standards of behavior imposed upon them by their human masters. A dog could go from puppyhood to parenthood without any form of learning experience which gave him the skills with which to make value judgments. Today dogs get their education mostly from television where they are shown their peers manipulating the humans who once were their masters. If you happen to be a human being, this is a bad scene. A woman, obviously subservient to a male with whom she resides, brings home a can of dog food. Her male co-resident, who is literate, reads the label on the can. The gullible woman has been victimized by a merchant who has sold her a can of dog food which contains ingredients instead of the can with meat and meat by-products which the male has been buying. Meat and meat by-products and the camera pans to the female, obviously a candidate for Adult Basic Education or a mental institution, who tells the male, "You're so smart." Anyone who watches the dog carefully during this scene can lip read him murmur, "Compared to what?" After the cameras are gone, the dog, wondering why humans are so stupid, eats the can containing ingredients, and excuses himself to go outside and work over the neighbors' shrubbery. Night after night millions of dogs watch on TV as their canine peers make value judgements and are thus inspired to make their own. It should be noted that this commercial does not manipulate dogs, who are too smart for such simplistic nonsense—it manipulates humans. Meantime, a good deal of the pedagogy which was once used by humans to train dogs to respond to the will of people has been adopted to the schooling of human beings. The moral for adult canine educators is, "You can't teach old dogs new tricks." The moral for adult human educators is, "Read the Label."

Continuing Education Offers A Smorgasbord of Fun and Learning

(September 16, 1974)

This is the time of year when an editor who remembers many hours of childhood spent studying the wonders in the Sears, Roebuck catalogue and in the advertisements in the *Saturday Evening Post* and *Collier's* knowing full well that they were out of reach of the children of an underpaid school master in a small Missouri town, comes down with an acute case of the nostalgias. The advertisements and catalogues for continuing education provide an appetizing smorgasbord of fun, games and learning that mostly are as far beyond his reach as were the wonders in the Sears catalogue. Some of the eye-catchers are reproduced on this page and some of the courses could easily become the subject of snide little mini-lectures about the condition of our society. The county in which I reside sends me a catalogue in tabloid newspaper form, addressed to Occupant, the nom de plume under which I conduct much of my correspondence. When I attempt to create a profile of Montgomery County, Maryland, by analyzing the courses offered the adults who dwell therein I can only come to the conclusion that no such place could possibly exist. When I was a boy the time always came when I had to put down the advertisements and do my homework (there isn't room to explain homework here; younger readers can undoubtedly locate a retired teacher who can tell them about this quaint custom of the past) and life doesn't change much for some people. The time has come to quit daydreaming about "Petting Potted Plants" and get on with Volume IV, Number 19.

A Self-Planned Learning Experience

(February 1975)

Last month your reporter undertook a self-planned learning experience and, as educators are wont to say when they plan to tell you something whether or not you are interested, I would like to share it with you.

Some personal background may help you understand my report. For more than 30 years I have been a political propagandist or a political journalist. In November of 1974 I turned away from the monitor and computer console I was using as an election coverage analyst for the American Broadcasting Company and quit politics cold turkey. I did read about politics, but I didn't work at it or write about it, like the guy who still goes into the saloon once in a while but only drinks a coke. The week before Thanksgiving I deliberately backslid. I went to the National Democratic Issues Convention at Louisville, KY.

This trip was planned as a two-way learning experience. I was seeking to learn something about what the Democratic Party was up to a year after I quit covering it first-hand, and I was going to see how an ambitious experiment in adult education would work out.

The Issues Convention had a two-fold educational mission. It was planned to involve 2,000 delegates first-hand in a program of lectures, seminars and question-and-answer interchanges revolving around political issues—the problems of our society and how they might be solved by political action. It was hoped that the

media coverage of these discussions would provide a learning experience for millions of adults who were not direct participants in the Convention. I deemed the first effort to be successful, but believed the second phase was possibly counter-productive.

The tone of the meeting turned out to be more academic than political. There was some hope among the delegates that political action would involve replacement of President Gerald Ford by a Democrat but, in addition, there was a great deal of soul searching planned about the strengths and weaknesses of the Democratic Party.

The Convention program speakers included political celebrities, certified thinkers and educational performing artists. Henry Steele Commager offered a provocative look at American history that might not pass the curriculum review committee of a Republican school board, but was certainly a learning experience. Pollsters Louis Harris, Pat Caddell and Peter Hart gave a reading on American opinion indicating that many Americans perceive the changes in society that some adult educators believe should be "taught" to all of our citizens.

Resource people at the remainder of the first day's session included Mayor Harvey Sloane, of Louisville, KY, Gov. Julian M. Carroll of Kentucky, Rep. Barbara Jordan (D-TX), Sen. Philip Hart (D-MI), UW President Leonard Woodcock, and Robert Strauss, Chairman of the Democratic National Committee. Also on the first day's program were Ben Wattenberg, co-author of *The Real Majority*, Gov. Michael Dukakis of Massachusetts, former Ohio Gov. John Gilligan, and Mayor Kenneth Gibson of Newark, NJ.

Gibson said the Democrats had better do something to improve public education because the schools were turning out a bunch of ignorant adults with high school diplomas. He suggested the country "should progress backward to where you had to learn something to be promoted from one grade to another." Wattenberg said we were realizing the American dream because we have more colleges than ever before. The audience was sophisticated enough to question this conjunction of the proliferation of colleges with the quality of education.

But the man who really laid it on the educational establishment

at the first day's session was Alvin Toffler, the voluble author of *Future Shock*. Some of you may have heard Toffler on education before, but it was unusual fare for a Democratic Convention, and not very cheerful fare for any American, Republican or Democrat. Toffler sees present worries and discontents as a symptom of the breakdown of parliamentary government in a post-industrial society. He argues that the Civil War was America's decision to change from an agrarian society to an industrial society. This required workers. Since the West was open, discontented industrial workers could emigrate from the eastern factories. To replace this labor pool we turned to immigration, and, of course, to young people entering the labor market. To have the right kind of labor pool we invented homogenizing machinery, the "melting pot" to teach The American Way (the key word there is "The," says Toffler) to the immigrants, and mass public education to make the native born young fitting members of the industrial society. This was done by what Toffler calls the "Secret Curriculum," the most important part of all of the skills and disciplines taught by public education. The "Secret Curriculum," Toffler says, consists of Punctuality, Obedience and Rote (this being conditioning for the acceptance of dull, repetitive jobs). Toffler argues that the "Secret Curriculum" taught citizens to accept "The American Way of Life," an assumption that there is only one socially approved, legitimate American Way of Life that includes Punctuality and Obedience. Others have made this point that the "3 R's" have been spiked with the work ethic, but have laid as much blame on the preachers as on the teachers for creating a docile work force.

But now that we are in a post-industrial society, Toffler says we must invent "Anticipatory Democracy" as an alternative to elitist government. This means that we have to plan from the bottom up and not from the top down. Toffler read a list of all the community goal projects now going on around the country and cited instances of self-planned learning and planning activity frequently heard discussed at adult education gatherings. The audience was interested, but neither Toffler nor anyone else commented on the fact that most of the discussion of education as a tool to solve national problems followed the familiar pattern of concentrating on teaching the young to straighten out their

elder's mistakes. When education came up in discussion of foreign policy issues it was cited as needed for adults in developing and undeveloped nations and it was suggested that the young here in the U.S. need to be taught more about global interdependence. Apparently, adults can learn all they need to know about global interdependence by reading the prices on the pump at the neighborhood filling station.

The next day's resource people included Rep. Morris Udall (D-AZ), Sen. Lloyd Bentsen (D-TX), economists Alan Ferguson, John Kenneth Galbraith and Charles Schultze, Sen. Birch Bayh (D-IN), Gov. Milton Shapp of Pennsylvania, Duke University Pres. Terry Sanford, Adm. Elmo Zumwalt, Sen. Claiborne Pell (D-RI), and former Deputy Asst. Sec. of Defense Adam Yarmolinsky. Unfortunately, all of their ideas and information were overshadowed by a learning experience which consisted of a massive protest march against busing in the Jefferson County (KY) Schools and ended with a confrontation between the protestors and the Louisville police outside the convention hall. What do you learn from this? You learn that many of the protestors want their children to have the education they did not have so that they can hold better paying and more rewarding jobs than their parents. Since all schools in Louisville and Jefferson County were not of equal quality, busing means that some children go to better schools than they formerly attended and some go to worse schools than they attended before busing and too many children have to spend an hour or more a day on a bus. And you learn from a Black who was part of the legal action to force the busing that some of the schools where the Blacks went before the busing order were clearly second rate. He put it this way: "The only way Blacks get a good education is by going to where the good education is being given out."

The delegates seemed to have more sympathy for the Blacks than for the anti-busing demonstrators. However, it was noted that both Blacks and whites in this situation were pursuing the same dream, the dream of education as a key to upward mobility and a more rewarding life. How the politicians and educators can teach the adult population to solve the dilemma this creates when they cannot solve it themselves baffled everyone. Finally, in a

good many of the panels the point was made that education was no longer a sure passport to an executive or professional career, so that blacks and whites may be struggling over a doomed dream. The point was also made that while education cannot provide us all with a prestigious job, it can maker us better citizens and enable us to enjoy a richer life. Some were even so bold as to cite the pleasures of culture and to suggest that more of our future population will be producing "culture" while less of it will be producing durable goods. Again, these are things we have heard at education meetings, but strange talk at a political gathering.

Sunday was the last day and it started out with a detailed discussion of post-Vietnam foreign policy featuring Sen. Henry Jackson (D-WA), former Peace Corps Administrator Sargent Shriver and former Gov. Jimmy Carter of Georgia, with Frances Fitzgerald, Richard Holbrooke and Penn Kemble asking questions of the Presidential hopefuls. It was actually a discussion, not an assault on the opposition party. This dialogue was overshadowed by a harsh speech given by Sen. George McGovern (D-SD), who said that any politician who saw busing of school children to achieve racial equality as a last resort instead of as a first resort was a moral coward or worse. Someone at the press table said that the lesson to be learned from this was that sons of preachers cannot resist delivering sermons on Sunday.

So what was the end result of this learning experience? I learned a lot and so did the delegates. I think it was a highly successful exercise in adult learning. It may not have increased Democratic chances of victory, but it certainly increased the civic competencies of every delegate who paid any attention to the program. The educational spin-off by the media was less successful. The discussions were not suitable for general media coverage. The headlines mostly announced that Democrats are split over busing, energy programs, how much to spend on national defense, on education and on health care, and on whether to have more or less intervention by the federal government in social and economic problems. That was not information of any great educational value. Not much of the content of the idea part of the Convention got covered by television or the daily newspapers. And I would guess that if they had reported this in detail, not many

would have read the reports. I also suspect that listening to tapes of the proceedings would be dull. But hearing from these people in person and discussing what they said with someone from another part of the country who earns his living in a different way than I do was educational to me, as I think it was to everyone there. I believe that the Louisville experiment in adult learning on political issues proves that we can have a better political dialogue than we have had in the past. It also proves that several hundred

Is U.S. Entitling Itself into Bankruptcy?

(May 25, 1975)

In its effort to hold down spending and prevent new government people service programs, the Administration has argued that the Federal government is spending itself into bankruptcy through "entitlement" programs such as Social Security, veterans' benefits, Medicare, pensions and the like. David S. Broder, the scholarly political columnist for *The Washington Post*, has developed some interesting background to this controversy. These programs have been growing and if they were to increase at their present rate while government grew only as fast as the economy, then by the year 2000 government would be consuming not the one-third of the Gross National Product that it does now, but would get more than 50 percent. But Broder makes several other points. The growth has been rapid to make up for neglect and does not need to continue at this rate. It was not "uncontrolled" but was a matter of deliberate political choice. They are not take-from-the-rich-to-help-the-poor schemes. There has been no substantial change in the distribution of income from rich to poor in the last two decades. Finally the burden of government in the U.S. is still smaller than it is in most other industrial countries. Broder did not get into the trade-offs, and the issue of what we cannot afford. For example, the benefit to the entire society from a national health program should be considered—not just the added federal expense it would bring about. There are many programs that fall into the what-we-cannot-afford category.

Everyone would say that we cannot afford to have no national defense program or no program of public education for our children. Some would say that we cannot afford to govern ourselves through the votes of an electorate whose members lack the ability to consider alternate courses of public action and evaluate their consequences as a part of their decision-making process before they cast their votes.

REPUBLICANS HOSTILE TO FEDERAL AID TO EDUCATION

(AUGUST 1976)

GOP Platform—Education

Our children deserve quality education.

We believe that segregated schools are morally wrong and unconstitutional. However, we oppose forced busing to achieve racial balances in our schools. We believe there are educational advantages for children in attending schools in their own neighborhoods and that the Democrat-controlled Congress has failed to enact legislation to protect this concept. The racial composition of many schools results from decisions by people about where they choose to live. If Congress continues to fail to act, we would favor consideration of an amendment to the Constitution forbidding the assignment of children to schools on the basis of race.

Our approach is to work to eradicate the root causes of segregated schools, such as housing discrimination and gerrymandered school districts. We must get on with the education of all our children.

Throughout our history, the education of our children has been a community responsibility. But now federal categorical grant programs pressure local school districts into substituting Washington-dictated priorities for their own. Local school administrators and school boards are being turned into bookkeepers for the federal government. Red tape and restrictive regulations stifle imagination and creativity. We are deeply concerned about the decline in the

performance of our schools and the decline in public confidence in them.

We favor consideration of tax credits for parents making elementary and secondary school tuition payments.

Local communities wishing to conduct nonsectarian prayers in their public schools should be able to do so. We favor a constitutional amendment to achieve this end.

We propose consolidating federal categorical grant programs into block grants and turning the money over to the states to use in accordance with their own needs and priorities and with minimum bureaucratic controls. A single program must preserve the funding that is directed at the needs of such special groups as the handicapped and disadvantaged.

Primary responsibility for education, particularly on the elementary and secondary levels, belongs to local communities and parents. Intrusion by the federal government must be avoided. Bureaucratic control of schools by Washington has the potential for destruction of our educational system by taking more and more decisions away from parents and local school authorities. Total financial dependence on the federal government inevitably leads to greater centralization of authority. We believe, therefore, that a study should be authorized concerning funding of elementary and secondary education, coupled with a study regarding return to the states of equivalent revenue to compensate for any loss in present levels of federal funding.

Unless steps are taken immediately, soaring prices will restrict a college education to the rich and those poor enough to qualify now for government aid. Federal higher education policy should continue to focus on financial aid for needy individuals, but because the financial ability to go to college is fast slipping out of the grasp of middle income families, more realistic eligibility guidelines for student aid are essential.

Government interference in the management of colleges and universities must by stopped. Federal support to assist in meeting the grave financial problems of higher education should be forthcoming, but such funds should never be used as devices for imposing added controls.

Diversity in education has great value. Public schools and

nonpublic schools should share in education funds on a constitutionally acceptable basis. Private colleges and universities should be assisted to maintain healthy competition and to enrich diversity. The cost of expanding public campuses can be kept down if existing private institutions are helped to accommodate our student population.

We favor continued special federal support for vocational education.

The foregoing is the Republican plank on education as adopted at the Convention. If it discourages educators who think the federal government should devote more of its funds to education, the debate which preceded the adoption of this compromise should make them very nervous, indeed. There was an intense, emotional exchange over a proposal by Rep. David C. Treen (R-LA) to consider ending federal aid to education under the Elementary and Secondary Schools Act and to return taxing authority to the states to enable them to raise school funds. Fortunately, or unfortunately, depending on which side of the argument you are on, Treen suggested cigarette taxes as a revenue source for the schools. This statement provided opponents to the Treen measure with ammunition to ridicule it. Finally, after a lot of heat from debate (most of the light was provided by the TV crews), Treen accepted the Dole-Treen compromise amendment you read in the platform, which authorizes a study concerning funding of elementary and secondary education.

If you watched the debate, you had to be impressed by the strong emotion of those who don't want the federal government to have any say about who is educated, or how. A good deal of the support for this proposal came from states which are critical of New York and other northeastern cities for being in trouble and are vocal in their condemnation of federal aid, but which get a greater proportion of federal funds than they contribute. The opposite is true of the Northeast. One of the Northeast's unsound fiscal practices is to pay federal taxes that go to states that may be against federal aid in principle, but in practice are there to get their share and more when the money is passed out. Most experts agree that federal aid has changed the operations of local school systems. In many areas it has led to more equity in the distribution

of educational opportunity, particularly in the case of Blacks, Chicanos and Indians, and the handicapped. As we all know, federal funds have persuaded a good many states and local school districts to do a lot more about adult basic education than was being done before federal funds were available.

There's something else to note in the platform. It wants nonpublic elementary and secondary schools to share in federal aid. Observers thought this was a coded way of saying that the private academies that somehow do not draw Black students in border and southern states would get some help. The anti-busing plank and the modified Treen plank are supposed to be the bait to draw votes from suburban areas which fear that the presence of Blacks in their children's schools will lower their own children's opportunity for a quality education.

Finally, we come to the strength of special interest groups. The strongest ones usually get a sentence stuck in to placate them. There is no such sentence on adult or continuing education, but there is one for vocational education. It was the subjective impression of this reporter that there was a latent hostility to local education operations as well as to the "federal bureaucracy." And he has a subjective feeling that, if this is the case, the schools are taking the blame for attitudes and values of the young that are shaped by radio, TV, the movies, changes in society and the economy, and by the skill or lack of skill of their progenitors in the difficult art of parenting. If these perceptions are correct, then we have a situation which might be improved by the intervention of some adult learning.

CARTER TRANSITION TEAM STUDIES EDUCATION

(DECEMBER 1976)

The Carter-Mondale Transition Planning Group has been digging deeper into the federal bureaucracy than any previous transition group. Sharlene P. Hirsch is coordinator for the Education and Human Development Group, HEW Team. Whereas in the past, transition workers have considered they were doing a thorough job if they talked to the assistant secretaries in a department, Dr. Hirsch and her team have visited with Paul Delker and others in the Division of Adult Education in the Office of Education and the report is that they know enough to ask good questions.

The deadline for sending in comments on education issues has passed, but we are printing the issues which interest the transition team because they give you a clue as to the thinking of the new Administration and the issues which will occupy the Carter appointees in their early days in office:

Transition Issues in Education

A. Legislative Options

Please give us your views on any or all of the following legislation which is coming up for reauthorization. In doing so, we hope you will also comment on the more general question of the appropriate role of the federal government in education.

1. Elementary and Secondary School Education Act

2. Emergency School Aid Act
3. Education of the Handicapped
4. Impact Aid (Aid to Federally-Affected Areas)
5. Library Services and Construction Act
6. Career Education

B. Organizational Options

Please respond to the following specific questions, restating each question before you comment:

1. Should there be a Department of Education? What, from your perspective, are the arguments pro, con, or both?
2. If a department is advisable, what should be included in the design?
3. If not, what organizational modifications, if any, would you recommend in the present federal administrative structure for education?

C. White House Conference on Education

Such a conference is legislatively mandated for 1977. If a conference is to be held,

1. What are some possible themes?
2. How should the conference be organized and designed?

Maybe There's an Interface—You Should Excuse the Expression—Between Reading and Writing

(February 1977)

One of the big educational discoveries of 1977 may be that there is some connection between the quality of writing and the ability of an individual to read and understand it. The evidence is not compelling, but there is enough of it to give hope to those of us who cling to the old-fashioned belief that the ability to perform these functions is a useful learning tool. Recently some newspapers and at least one of the TV networks picked up this exchange between the principal of a high school and student's parent in Houston:

"Our school's cross-graded multi-ethnic, individualized learning program is designed to enhance the concept of an open-ended learning program with emphasis on a continuum of multi-ethnic, academically enriched learning using the identified intellectually gifted child as the agent or director of his own learning..."

"The parent wrote back: 'I have a college degree, speak two foreign languages and four Indian dialects, have been to a number of county fairs and three goat ropings, but I haven't the faintest idea as to what the hell you are talking about. Do you?' "

Well, I have two college degrees, misspeak two languages, have been to four world's fairs and two chitterling struts, and I'm with the parent. We both should be encouraged by word in the *New York Times* that colleges and universities all across the country are moving to improve the writing ability of their students.

Cornell University has named a full-time dean for writing. The College Board plans to reinstate next fall a 20-minute essay section in its English composition achievement test. *Mirabile dictu!* as my Latin-teaching daddy used to say. How clever to test a student's ability at composition by having him actually write a composition! A Columbia University dean complains that that institution gets high school graduates "who have never had to write a paper every week and had it corrected for them." Well, the colleges are busy blaming the high schools, but a good many colleges aren't doing much better. Freshman English is taught, all too often as *The Times* points out, by hacks or by persons whose interests run more to reading the Elizabethan poets than wrestling adolescents into writing a simple, clear declarative sentence. The man who taught my freshman English class at Washington University read some kind of composition from each of his students every week and wrote comments on it and was always ready to sit down with you in his office and discuss them—at length. This discipline enabled one of my classmates, Josephine Johnson, to write a novel which won a Pulitzer Prize, and about the worst our Professor turned out were persons like myself, who at least respect clear writing, even though we don't always achieve it.

The big objection to a return to this sort of thing is that it takes time and costs money. It's easier and cheaper to grade punch card tests. The other obstacle is that some scholars—scholars?—are against teaching better writing. *The Times* quotes James Flightner, who teaches foreign languages at the University of Montana, as saying that imposing a writing standard will cause students to drop out and "introduce one more obstacle in the path of social mobility in our society." He says that the problem of the student who cannot write clearly "is society's fault." And then there are the nuts who argue that reading and writing are an impediment to communication, which should be conducted better by camera and tape machine. But the momentum at the moment seems to be on the side of those who want more attention paid to teaching students to write clearly. The kind of language cited at the beginning of this article is an obstacle to reading. Bad writers make bad readers and vice versa.

And what does all this have to do with adult education? Well, there are a lot of adults who have left the high school classroom or the campus of a college or university without the ability to write clearly. Not all of them have found jobs preparing criteria and regulations at the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. Some of them are writing unclear language that afflicts us all. So the notion here is that the subject of adult inadequacy at reading and writing among the "educated" should get some very serious attention by those who are working on Lifelong Learning concepts and programs. It might be appropriate to add that not all educators are willing to be passive victims of sloppy writing. Some of our readers have been kind enough to suggest that the editor take a remedial course in Jargon Avoidance and How To End the Non-Stop Sentence. *Touche!*

Good News—Sort of—from Jossey-Bass and Playboy

(March 1977)

It was a coincidence that I read *The Future of Adult Education*, a new and challenging Jossey-Bass book by Fred Harvey Harrington, the same day I read a *Playboy* ad in *The New York Times* about the lifestyle, values and mores of Dawson Wallace, Senior Sales Representative of Xerox Corporation, a student during the sixties, now an adult and making his contribution to the society of the seventies. Fred Harrington is the one of these two who is more concerned about the future and more concerned about others than about himself. It is a concern that seems to have infected many of us whose equivalent of the sixties was the thirties, so I have to plead guilty to greater compatibility with Fred Harrington than with Mr. Wallace.

One of the reasons I liked the Harrington book was that it was packed with information, much of which I have seen in bits and pieces and wished would be organized by some careful scholar experienced in adult learning. It confronts the claim that adult and continuing education has been a great equalizer in our society. Dr. Harrington finds "adult education has widened rather than narrowed the gap between the well-to-do and the poor, the socially acceptable and all the rest" and documents his case. He talks about the second-class status of adult educators and says. "...there are numerous topflight adult educators in our colleges and universities...They are good enough, obviously, to speak up more often and more loudly than they do. But now they talk mostly to

themselves. They should talk more to others, should push themselves and their products..."

On the inequity of generous public subsidies and private endowments limited to elementary, secondary and conventional postsecondary education, Dr. Harrington points out that adult education provides exactly the same benefits to society that these expenditures are supposed to produce. He notes "It is the same, exactly the same, in the case of the education of older men and women. Adults benefit individually as they learn and are trained, retrained or upgraded. There is even greater benefit, however, for the government, the economy, the culture and the general welfare. The continuing education of professionals increases the gross national product. Other adult education, credit and noncredit, makes citizens more productive in their working lives, better able to wrestle with the problems of the day. In the process, the public taste improves, and Americans can use their leisure time more constructively. This represents a gain for the nation, as well as for individual citizens, just as with younger students."

Finally—and remember that Dr. Harrington is concerning himself not with the broad scope of the concept of Lifelong Learning so much as with the role of colleges and universities in that concept—we come to the recommendations:

1. American colleges and universities must recognize that educating adults is one of their fundamental responsibilities.

2. Colleges and universities should welcome adult men and women as degree students, on and off campus, part- and full-time, in traditional and nontraditional programs; and, while protecting standards, the institutions should make the adjustments necessary to accommodate this clientele.

3. Colleges and universities should expand and improve their noncredit offerings in continuing professional education and liberal education for adults; they should encourage Americans to make better use of leisure time; and they should not hesitate to become involved in problem-solving action programs.

4. To make their work with adults effective, colleges and universities must provide help for the disadvantaged; must strengthen the organizational structure of their institutions and support the development of adult education as a special field of study, and must do what is possible to improve the financial situation.

And what does all this have to do with Dawson Wallace in the *Playboy* ad? Well, Mr. Wallace "doesn't worry about the future because 'that's tomorrow and it's not worth a cent today.' He's very much focused into today and what he can do for himself today."

Playboy quotes others in Wallace's peer group: "I figure if I buy it I'll find a way to pay for it. So I buy it." "I'm very price conscious. I stay away from cheap." "To me a travel bargain is someplace the old folks don't go." "I made a lot of money last year, but somehow I spent a thousand dollars more than I made." *Playboy* adds an applauding comment: "This is a vital, exciting, spending group of young men."

Well, maybe this *Playboy* prototype will marry the *Cosmopolitan* Girl (they certainly deserve each other and their progeny should be something to behold) and they will both enroll in self-improvement classes at their local community college and bowl on Friday nights. Maybe.

Meantime it seems to me the values of *Playboy*'s "educated" young men point to the need for a book, an angry book, a crusading book that someone with the background, status and writing skill of a Fred Harrington should produce. It might be entitled, "The Future of Adult education Is the Future of All of Us." *Playboy*'s Dawson Wallace may seem a caricature to some of us, but he is a caricature of the products of present elementary, secondary and postsecondary education who have been trained to earn a living but who have no more conscience than a mink in heat and no more of a grasp of what our democratic society is about than Archie Bunker or Mary Hartman, Mary Hartman. This angry book would argue that our democratic society needs knowledgeable adults to withstand the stresses and strains that lie ahead as machines continue to take work from people and the raw materials that provide our material

comforts dwindle dangerously and rapidly.

This is not what Fred Harrington set out to write. What he did set out to write he put down clearly, interestingly and persuasively. You should read the book. Maybe I should try to conclude on an upbeat note. *Playboy* prints this headline in big black type: "Good news for American business: Today's young men are no longer committed to poverty." Only thing wrong there is that a lot of young men, black Vietnam veterans, for example, believe they are committed to poverty. You can get the Harrington book from Jossey-Bass, 615 Montgomery St., San Francisco, CA 94111. You don't need the *Playboy* ad.

ZIEGLER'S FUTURE JUST PASSED

(MAY 1977)

The final report of "The Future of Adult Education and Learning in the United States" Project, conducted for the Division of Adult Education, USOE, by the Educational Policy Research Center of the Syracuse University Research Corporation, has finally arrived, accompanied by a warm, insulting letter from project director Warren L. Ziegler. I was a part of that project for a period, hired as the pointy-head amongst egg-heads, with the idea that, if I could translate their thoughts from educationese into the middle-suburban shopping center dialect I speak, the deep perceptions of the educators could be passed along to the general public. About the only thing the eggheads agreed upon was that whatever I wrote lost something in the translation. Despite this humiliation, I deemed the project useful and I hope that it will not be overlooked by the Lifelong Learning Project of the Division of Education. Ziegler's executive summary of the report follows:

This final report on the *Future of Adult Education and Learning in the United States* summarizes main conclusions at the levels of concept, policy and practice. It also sets forth (a set of) policy criteria and program guidelines the thrust of which is to enhance, support and facilitate the deliberate learning of adult Americans without forcing that learning to take place within the formal educational establishment (institutions, organizations, delivery systems and settings).

Central to this thrust is a crucial distinction between the *learning of adults* and *(adult) education*. Most, perhaps all, adults engage in deliberate, self-initiated/planned/directed learning. Very little of it yet takes place within existing, legitimated educational settings. Though intermittent, the learning activities of adults are lifelong. Should, and if so, how can public policy enhance adults' learning activities without rendering them compulsory by legitimating them only within the conventional educational apparatus? That is the central question which this project addressed within the context of societal futures whose characteristics, problems and agendas are difficult to forecast.

Central to our conclusions is the notion that society, in all of its structures and institutions of human interaction, should remain sufficiently open, participatory and pluralistic to enable a robust, noncentralized, highly diversified system of adult learning to flourish. That conclusion suggests that public policy should not aim at supporting lifelong learning, for historically public policy support has led to prescribing, limiting and rendering compulsory the human activities on which it focuses. However, we conclude that it is likely that public policy will increasingly embrace lifelong learning. Therefore, the project attempted to define policy guidelines by which (adult) education, in all of its modes, supports the maintenance and extension of open-ended, highly-diversified, participant-directed adult learning activities. These criteria and guidelines call for policies which:

a. Enhance learner competence for choice, responsibility and decision about their own learning.

b. Allocate public dollars to organizations and programs which demonstrate an ability to nurture adult learner competence in planning and evaluating their own learning.

c. Allocate public dollars to organizations and programs which, in fact, provide information adequate and appropriate to the nurture and actualization of adult learner competence.

d. Promote a disposition among adults for further learning rather than for closure or terminal learning.

e. (Aimed at the educationally-disadvantaged group), identify and support learning opportunities within settings which are least threatening to those adults who are least competent in planning

and evaluating their own learning.

f. Promote, encourage and support adult learning in all of its forms as a necessary part of implementing all public policies.

If you want to learn more about this unique contribution to the literature on lifelong learning, the address of EPRC/SURC is Merrill Lane, Syracuse, NY 13210.

Routine Hearing Turns into Wide-Ranging Talk Show

(July 1977)

What had been expected to be a routine hearing on extension of the Adult Education Act by the House Subcommittee on Elementary and Secondary Education on July 12 turned out to be a wide-ranging discussion that was livelier and more provocative than most of the carefully planned seminars at national conferences on adult education.

The Adult Education Association, the National University Extension Association, the National Advisory Council on Adult Education and the National Association for Public Continuing and Adult Education were the organizations testifying after Paul Delker, chief of the Division of Adult Education of the Office of Education, stated the Administration's position.

In introducing Delker, Rep. Carl Perkins (D-KY), chairman of the House Education and Labor Committee as well as of the Subcommittee, praised ABE as one of the more effective federal education programs. Asked how the Act might be amended to reach the people found to be incompetent by the APL study, Delker suggested a switch from emphasis upon high school equivalency to competencies. Delker was doing fine until he suggested ability to make a dress was a way to measure the success of ABE. Perkins interrupted to say, "The greatest thing is that an individual learns to read and write and do some calculating. From these basic skills, everything else can be learned."

Rep. Ronald L. Motti (D-OK) asked if the witnesses supported competency testing for elementary and secondary students and received an affirmative answer. Rep. William F. Goodling (R-PA) wanted to know how to reach more adults. Delker cited the need for more support services and noted that some groups needed home-based learning, a program that has succeeded in Perkins' district in Appalachian Kentucky. Questioning of Delker brought out that states are now matching the federal grant 31-1.2 cents to the dollar, but 18 states provide only the required 10 percent while the top 12 states provide 70 percent of the overmatch.

Rep. Joseph A. LeFante (D-N) said that the figures presented on APL indicated that 63 million adults lacked everyday competencies and asked their geographical location. Delker said that the southeastern region has the highest percentage, about one-fourth, while the northeast and northwest have about 14 percent. Rep. Dale E. Kildee (D-MI), a former teacher of adults, showed up to say how important and valuable adult education was, and how much it had done in Flint, Michigan, where it shares in the beneficence of the Mott Foundation, which has sought to help Flint schools serve the population at every age. Rep. Larry Pressler (R-SD) got into the question of state advisory councils and Gary Eyre, executive director of the National Advisory Council, noted that 37 states have them but only two meet the requirements that enable them to use federal funds.

Rep. Cecil Heftel (D-HI), a freshman from Hawaii, took over the chair when Perkins left to try to round up a quorum of the full Committee to mark-up a bill on forced retirement, and soon had things zinging. He started out by saying, "You're saying that half of the adults are not equipped to meet their daily needs. Should we be talking about adult education or about the entire educational system?" Delker pointed out that former OE Commissioner Ted Bell had suggested in connection with the announcement of the APL study that elementary and secondary schools should look at their operations in light of the findings. This didn't satisfy Heftel, who asked, "Aren't we evading the issue that grammar and high schools are not meeting the needs of their students? Don't we need work experience in these schools? We

have teachers who can't communicate with half of their students."

Dr. Eyre defended American public education, stating that it had sent a man to the moon and that when you travel in other countries you see that our system is superior. He plugged lifelong learning and noted that we do not have a national education policy. (And, of course, national education policy is not going to be set at a hearing on a relatively minor bill such as adult education authorization.)

Heftel snapped back that putting a man on the moon was not relevant to the fact that 50 percent of students are not being given the proficiencies to function by grammar and high schools. He said that saying that our schools were better than those in other countries was like saying we could stop worrying about human rights because our citizens enjoy more of them than do Soviet citizens.

Delker sought to relate Heftel's complaint to adult education by noting that there were some data that showed that the children of adult education students do better than the children of illiterates who are not studying. He also made the point that "we" (educators like Delker and Congressmen like Heftel) have made society so complicated that we are making life impossible for half of the people.

At this point the senior Republican on the Committee, Albert Quie of Minnesota, got into the act, saying, "We're failing half of the students. If we made shoes like we educate children we would pick the average size foot and make all shoes to fit that size and fit only about 10 percent of the actual feet." He asserted that educators want to replicate the comfortable isolation of their college years when the actual need is for a sense of community.

Heftel returned to the fray to quote indignantly a statement by a superintendent of an 800,000 student school system as saying that his high school diplomas represented attendance, not achievement. At this point my notes read: Right speech, wrong audience. Adult education is trying to help the victims of this school system for the good of society.

Finally Eyre suggested some ideas for improving public

education.

1. Ungraded elementary schools. (Why teach third-grade reading to a student who needs third-grade arithmetic but can read at the fifth-grade level?)

2. Larger learning blocks.

3. Return to the basics.

4. Getting away from the extra-curricular burdens society has been laying on education-feeding, busing, 12-hour nursemaid service, etc.

5. Getting parents more involved in their children's education by learning themselves and getting them to stop thinking of schools as the only learning source.

James R. Dorland, executive director of the National Association for Public Continuing and Adult Education, followed up on this by noting that education is nowhere near the top of our list of national priorities. He pointed out that the 1976 Presidential debates never did touch on education. He added, "As adult educators, we don't see the education system changing over night. We have a program-remedial, maybe only a bandaid—— but I suggest we had better continue the program that serves that part of the population that has not been served by other programs."

The subject of priorities reminded Heftel that during the campaign Candidate Carter had promised a separate Department of Education, but he sarcastically noted that "Secretary of HEW Califano is not interested. If we bury education in the problems of health and welfare we won't solve its problems." Heftel concluded the hearing by noting that you don't solve the problem of a defective house by repairing from the top down but from the bottom up.

In the free-for-all informal talk that followed the fall of the gavel it was pointed out to Heftel that society might be compared

to an office building where the big decisions are made on the top floors. The children are on the lower floors of this symbolic structure and it is adults who occupy the upper floors and make the decisions. You do not solve the problems of the mistakes that are being made by the adults on the top floors by educating the children in the basement. The only immediate way to solve the problem of adult ignorance is adult education. It wasn't clear whether Heftel didn't get the point or didn't want to because his real interest is in what goes on in the grammar school and the high school. He did note that he would have enjoyed continuing the discussion for the rest of the day, but that he had to occupy himself with several other important issues and that this was part of the problem of Congress. It is also a good part of the problem of adult education, of all education. There are "more important things" for everyone to put ahead of education.

Higher Educators are "Anticipating the Challenge of Lifelong Learning"

(October 1977)

Lifelong Learning finally made it on the agenda of the efficient and effective American Council on Education, the umbrella organization and lobby for postsecondary institutions. The 60th annual meeting of ACE, held in Washington in October, was devoted to "Students and their Institutions: A Changing Relationship." The panel on "Anticipating the Challenge of Lifelong Learning" was moderated by Frank Newman, president of the University of Rhode Island. The panel members were David P. Gardner, president, University of Utah; Susan Rink, B.V.M., president, Mundelein College; and Alfred S. Warren, Jr., general director of personnel, Fisher Body Division, General Motors Corporation.

The academic members had prepared essays to read in advance of the panel discussion so there could be a minimum of presentation and a maximum of questions and answers.

Gardner warmed up his audience by telling the Winston Churchill story about the Briton who got an express train which made an unscheduled stop at his station. The conductor politely told him he would have to debark as "this train does not stop at this station." The unwanted passenger responded that he could not be put off since "if this train does not stop here then I am not on it." After two years of attending conferences and seminars on Lifelong Learning, this reporter feels a strong identification with the passenger.

Gardner suggested that educators should talk more with outsiders about Lifelong Learning. Sister Rink started by saying she was tempted to ask that all of the students in the room stand. There were none, of course. Early on in the Q and A period someone said he was "appalled" that ACE would hold a panel on Lifelong Learning without a representative from a community college. This produced a rash of faculty lounge humor in which questioners and their respondents were "appalled" about this and that, but the thrust about community colleges struck home. Most of those at the session were aware that community colleges have plunged into many areas of adult education and are learning by doing, while older institutions have their extension and continuing education toe barely touching the pool and are debating whether to push it all the way in. It could be said that holding a panel at the ACE meeting is a way to hang your clothes on a hickory limb without going into the water.

Mundelein College has plunged into the water with a successful residential weekend college. The college found that a course on the strategy of learning was so successful with its adult weekend students that it modified it and gave it to its regular students. Sister Rink also was informative on such academic problems as how many custodial employees and lifeguards had to be added to the payroll to support a weekend college. And she said the professors had to abandon the old jokes they had been inflicting on their regular undergraduates year after year.

Gardner suggested that it is "not unreasonable to speculate that by the turn of the century a good many of our campuses will have been transformed from centers of learning into learning centers housing a highly mobile population of students and scholars, a small resident population for study primarily at the most advanced levels (and by the very ablest students at all levels), and an integrated network of libraries, computers, television, and other teaching resources designed as much for residential as for off-campus study and research. In short, the campus will have become a network of associations, arrangements and resources that will permit the student to have a university or college with him at home, at work and at his leisure throughout his lifetime."

Warren said GM believes that "The group is more important than the individual" and that this is reflected in its training and learning programs. He suggested that the fact the available funds for free tuition for GM employees are not used indicates that educators are not providing the learning that GM employees want. Warren suggested that educators must enable industry to get the maximum potential out of the individual to compete with Japanese competition. Warren made several provocative points, including the statement that colleges did not educate his generation either to be leaders or followers. Both of these skills are as essential to a democratic society as they are to a corporation or a university, but my notes show that while Lifelong Learning was talked about as a means of career improvement and of individual enrichment, its impact upon the quality of our self-government and upon our society was not emphasized.

HOULE AND KNOWLES ADD SPARKLE TO PORTLAND CONFERENCE

(NOVEMBER 1978)

Cyril Houle and his disciple-colleague, Malcolm Knowles, provided sparkle to the Portland meetings. Both are performers as well as thinkers and it is a nuisance to have to take notes, knowing that what you write will suffer a value loss about equal to that which occurs when people who stay up for Saturday Night Live recount it for the benefit of their stodgy elders who go to bed early. Knowles had a session to himself on "New Directions in Human Resource Development" and he proposed that we have "a system of learning resources instead of a program of education."

He listed a catalogue of development resources including the aged, and predicted a ferment of innovation in new systems to make these resources available. He is spending a good deal of time exploring models of competencies needed for various life roles—home, citizen, career, etc.

He proposed that the individual could devise a model of what he wanted to do and pick the competencies it requires; the individual would perceive his gaps in capacities and thus be motivated to learn. Knowles would have a learning contract with four columns:

What Am I Going to Learn?	How Will I Learn It?	How Will I Know I Learned It?	How Will I Prove I Learned It?

He suggested if we think of learning as self-development

rather than meeting requirements, our attitude will change and that the contract would widen learning resources beyond a book and teacher.

There was a lot more, including the idea that our bureaucracy is geared to stability and does not know how to handle change. He called it dysfunctional to have our social arrangements geared to stability.

Knowles thought that the experiential learning in professional schools of medicine and law was a method that could be used in graduate schools of education, which he suggested were run too much like the history department. He thought that perhaps schools of education sought to be academically respectable by aping the older academic disciplines.

Knowles revealed that he has been working on a self-directed competency-based graduate school model and has identified about 50 general competencies. He suggested that using these competencies would change the purpose of graduate study for getting credit to getting equipment to function as an adult educator.

Houle, who preferred "competence" to "competency," suggested that "beyond competence lies performance." He remarked that there is a strong discontinuity between what you know and how you perform, telling the old story about the farmer who told the extension agent, "I already know how to farm better than I'm doing now."

He suggested that we might do more graduate study in adult education outside the university entirely, citing the Council of Academic Awards in Britain as a model.

Houle stated that he started writing books about adult education as a teenager and I am ready to believe him because I have persuaded myself that I covered FDR's press conferences as a boy of ten.

Someone suggested to Houle that it was harder to evaluate the performance education of adult educators than the performance of doctors because the clients of doctors die. Houle suggested that it was difficult to evaluate the performance of doctors because they have a hundred percent failure rate.

The audience was slow and Houle said, "I can wait." Then he

got a big double-take round of laughter.

Huey Long wanted to know if we have sequences or hierarchies of competencies. Knowles suggested there was a sequence moving from craftsmanship to wisdom—the ability to sense complex factors and make a wise decision. Houle warned that many priorities set would have to change to meet the changing conditions that he said had kept him running as hard as he could since he got his degree "just to keep up" with the changes in society and the change in education they required.

He said that maybe if universities didn't keep up with change their campuses would wind up as prisons. Which started at least one reverie. How many readers, like this writer, regarded their campus as a place of restrictions rather than as a crossroads with a thousand paths open to an exciting future? And whose fault was it?

FOES OF MANDATORY CONTINUING EDUCATION MEET

(JULY 1979)

No Continuing Education Units (CEUs) were awarded, no increments earned, no certificates issued, and no degrees conferred when some forty opponents of Mandatory Continuing Education (MCE) voluntarily gathered at the Highlander Center in New Market, Tennessee, over the first weekend in June. "There couldn't be a more ideal place from which to launch this struggle," noted John Ohliger, veteran adult educator and social activist who convened the session through the movement's newsletter, *Second Thoughts*. "Highlander has pioneered in adult education for social change—education without coercion, credits, or degrees."

Concern about MCE has been growing among adult educators since the issue emerged dramatically at the 1977 National Adult Education Conference in Detroit. There, *Second Thoughts* convened a rump session on the issue at a YMCA down the street from the convention hotel. Later, the issue reached the convention floor when J. Roby Kidd, Toronto-based world leader in adult education, in his conference synthesis said: "This is not only a matter of great social importance, but one on which we would expect adult educators to make a major contribution. (But) instead of careful review of what is happening, some adult educators have accepted the legislation with approval or with glee. It seems that we are pathetically pleased to be wanted, to be recognized even for the wrong reasons, and we have been quick

to see that in the short run there may be money to be made by offering programs to people who are legally compelled to attend some activities."

Participants at Highlander included representatives from major professions in which MCE is burgeoning: law, nursing, veterinary medicine, library science. Among the adult educators present were several professors and students as well as "alternative" leaders such as Bill Draves of the Free University Network (FUN), Bob Lewis, who helped found the flagship Learning Exchange in Evanston, Illinois, Ken Fischer, formerly director of the Post-Secondary Education Convening Authority (PECA) and currently head of The Learners' Forum in DC, and Ron Gross, whose book *The Lifelong Learner* espouses new forms of self-directed learning.

The prevailing spirit was iconoclastic and radical. "MCE is part of an onrushing 1984-type society in which everything that isn't prohibited is required," declared Ohliger. "After years of social activism in Civil Rights, the peace movement, and alternative media, I came to the conviction that I should be working for a better society in my own field—adult education. This cause is my way to do that."

Many participants from other professions shared deep concern. "I'm fighting against MCE for nurses," explained Alice Kuramoto, associate dean for continuing education for nursing at the University of Washington, "because I don't see it correlating with competence. It turns learning into merely collecting pieces of paper certifying that you've completed courses. It distracts from real learning that leads to competence."

Two veteran trainers of librarians, independent consultant Barbara Conroy from Colorado and Kathleen Weibel from the New York State Education Department, agreed that it was deeply troubling that professionals in their field, who preside over the major institution of "free learning," should themselves be slouching towards classroom-based continuing professional education.

Said A. O. Griffiths, president-elect of the Illinois State Veterinary Medical Association, "It is the ultimate irony that Americans are so eager to relinquish freedom and independence of spirit and

action for uniform mediocrity engendered by bureaucratic control."

But other participants reflected the paradox that human values are sometimes realized through coerced learning. "I've been in schools for 28 of my 51 years, and actually enjoyed most of it," admitted Phyllis Cunningham. "Now, as a teacher of future adult educators in the graduate program at Northern Illinois University, I find myself in the odd position of making it mandatory that my students move towards more self-directed, voluntary, autonomous learning. I'm sometimes mighty confused."

The discussion focused on rigorous analysis of the problems presented by MCE, vigorous exploration of alternatives to coercive learning for adults, and ambitious follow-up plans by individual participants and by the group as a whole. While the conference did not issue a formal declaration or seek consensus, a number of conclusions and proposals seemed to evoke general agreement, among them: the anti-MCE movement should emphasize its positive stance of supporting voluntary, humanistic adult learning, and not degenerate into a negative one-issue cause; alliances should be sought with other self-help, decentralized, social-change organizations within and outside of education; adult educators concerned about MCE should make their views heard at the local, regional, and national level; new ways to encourage and validate learning without recourse to coercion or established credentialing institutions should be explored. Perhaps the principal outcome was a strengthened sense of hope and a strong impulse toward continued communication and collective action on the part of the professional adult educators attending.

Further information about the network and its newsletter *Second Thoughts* is available from 1121 University Avenue, Madison, Wisconsin 53715.

A Bridge to the New Decade

(November 1979)

Notes and Impressions

This is written after five days of total immersion in adult and continuing education at the Boston conference. The hours are long, and a reporter who attempts to sample as much as possible of the huge smorgasbord of events finds himself with a touch of mental indigestion as well as physical fatigue.

Perhaps the notes should have been sorted neatly each evening at Boston, but when the sorting process began, the brain was lured down all sorts of side streets of thought. This, I think, is a tribute to the variety of the program, which provided an opportunity for the conferees to carry out their varied agendas.

Some came to impart information, skills, and techniques, others came to learn. Some came to gain exposure, some to take office, and others to leave office. A very few of us came to report what happened. These few have a curious agenda because we cannot concentrate, as some may do, on any one area of concern: the aged, displaced homemakers, competency education, or international education. What will follow does not attempt to be a complete and rounded synthesis. It is a brief account of what one reporter was able to see and hear.

The conference would seem to indicate that adult and continuing education is a growth industry. There were more exhibitors and more advertisements in the program than ever before, and more than 2,000 registered participants, making it probably the

most profitable conference ever for its sponsors, the Adult Education Association and the National Association for Public Continuing and Adult Education.

I don't have a clearer picture of the next decade than I had when I went to Boston, but I do have a few impressions about the people who came to be bridged. The majority of them represented educational institutions, and presumably their trips were funded by public treasuries. They seemed to be a bit younger than previous conferees but a bit more interested in a growing market—the aged.

Career change education, help for displaced female homemakers, equal opportunities for women and racial minorities—all these seemed to be popular topics.

Competency-based adult education continues to thrive despite all of the sticks poked at it by its critics and the fun poked at it by its friends in an APL Roast held in Boston.

"Lifelong Learning" seems to be slipping drastically as a popular buzz phrase, but the concept seems to have maintained its status since last year.

"Community-based organizations" seems to be coming on strong as a new buzz phrase, partly as a result of the new federal Adult Education Act and partly as a result of Carman Hunter and David Harman's new book. However, few of the community organizers I know have the resources to spend a week in a $50-a-day hotel room, so community organizers were more of a topic than a presence at Boston.

While the people at the conference seemed to me to be a tad younger than last year, there were not as many young people as I would like to have seen. With travel costs soaring and educational institutions retrenching, it is going to be more and more difficult for the young adult educator to enjoy the benefits of attending a national conference. It would be nice if some foundation would bankroll a conference for young adult educators and some of the young community-based activists, who cannot afford the good life at the Sheraton-Boston.

At Boston there was an earnest keynote by Malcolm Knowles, a trendy anti-trendyism talk by columnist Ellen Goodman, and at a poorly attended final session an event that should have been

scheduled at the start of the conference—Dr. Carman St. John Hunter's discussion of her book on adult illiteracy.

While the adult educators were in conference, Boston re-elected its mayor and Senator Edward Kennedy and Governor Jerry Brown dropped by to say they were going to run for the Democratic nomination for President. Each of these events attracted more media attention than the conference. In fact, if the conference achieved any mention on local stations or any ink in the newspapers, I missed it. This doesn't seem to bother anyone but me, since many adult educators regard the national conference as their own business. I continue to think they should use the conference to attract general coverage and that they should develop participation by more outsiders. I don't have to take my shoes off to count the persons on the program from outside the education profession or allied business ventures. The conference could be a vehicle for outreach to political and civic leaders whose support is badly needed by adult and continuing education in these days of government entrenchment. This one was not, and it is a pity, because a good deal was said and done that outsiders should know about. There was a lot of talk about outreach at Boston, but no real outreach took place. Ah well, maybe in the next decade.

KNOWLES DESCRIBES NEW DECADE IN KEYNOTE

(NOVEMBER 1979)

The speaker at the first general session was Malcolm S. Knowles, who needs no identification. The title was "Preparing to Cross the Bridge," and the stated purpose was to enable the conferees to use the gathering "to build one's own bridge to the new decade." It was a provocative presentation, but some in the audience were a little disappointed, which perhaps indicates that past Knowles performances have created expectations of ever greater brilliance.

Knowles said a major purpose of the conference was to strengthen linkages and networking for the stress of the '80s, to explore the major developments of the '80s, and to work at personal professional development. He then suggested the next fifteen minutes be spent getting acquainted with people in other groups. The room sounded like a big cocktail party. Then there was a ten-minute period to brainstorm the next decade in the country, in the world, and in the field of adult education. Once people got started, this proved to be longer than a ten-minute task. I heard the belief that universities and colleges would get out of the ivory tower and that there would be closer relations between industries and colleges. Someone described an operation where college students seemed to be spending more time preparing for specific jobs in a nearby electronics corporation than they did on such old-fashioned nonsense as courses in history, literature, foreign languages, economics, sociology and

such.

Knowles then sought to help his listeners to link the remainder of the conference program with the changes and trends he foresaw for the next decade. He said the dominant force of the '80s would be accelerating change, and the central competency would be the ability to change. That was it. There was no time to discuss whether all change was desirable, whether some should be encouraged and some resisted—the idea put forth was just that change is coming, and we have to go with the flow.

Knowles foresaw a fundamental reconceptualization of the whole educational system. He held that the mission to produce knowledgeable people was obsolete, and the new goal would be to produce the competency to learn on your own—to diagnose your learning needs, to find the resources to met them, to use these resources, and finally to evaluate your own learning. Some of us jumped the gun into the '80s and awarded ourselves doctorates right on the spot, after a quick evaluation of our experiential learning.

As he projected into the future, Knowles reminded us we will have to eliminate illiteracy, both functional and absolute. The 21st century notion would be to take education where the people are, and universities will have to get their faculties out into "the real world." He said there will be new ways to utilize the media and that there will be functional work groups that will engage in education and training. He even foresaw new institutional arrangements: consortia of educational and other institutions delivering a variety of services to people.

Next Knowles said that higher education institutions will shift to become predominately adult. He said the adult students will want credentials, so there will be more credit given for experience. In keeping with this focus on adult learners he asserted that the nation's citizens will acknowledge that the stake in adult learning is as great as the stake in children's learning.

Knowles also saw jobs becoming obsolescent at such a rapid rate that many persons would have seven or eight careers in a lifetime, requiring a great deal of adult education help in making these career changes. It was interesting that he thought volunteerism would become a career. How this will take place as

more and more families find it necessary for both husband and wife to hold full-time jobs puzzled some of us.

Another change which Knowles predicted was that there will be institutional reforms to provide more education for the elderly because the "aged have the votes." Perhaps so, but my experience in working with a membership organization of the aged is that they need to use all of their political muscle to get food, clothing, shelter and medical care.

In the next decade, Knowles told us, there will be much greater knowledge about how adults learn, along with other significant changes. We were encouraged to look through the program ourselves to identify sessions dealing with the changes we foresaw for the '80s. With that, the conference was off to a bustling start.

Nader Gets Standing Ovation at Opening NCEA Session

(December 1979)

The opening session of the NCEA convention began with welcoming remarks from Massachusetts Gov. Edward J. King and the presentation of an award to John Guenther, executive director of the U.S. Conference of Mayors. Thus, it was revealed that at the national level the community educators are recognizing and working with political leaders in the cities as well as with educational leaders. The keynote address was given by consumer advocate Ralph Nader, who received a standing ovation at the completion of his remarks.

Nader discussed the ventures which currently occupy most of his time and occasionally referred to their ties with community education. He started out by taking a whack at Harvard, noting that its academic eminence increased while the Cambridge community surrounding the university deteriorated; then he expressed his hope that education will begin to show people how they can work together toward common ends in our society.

Nader suggested that education systems reflect the power structure on the outside and decried what he sees as undue corporate pressures on eduction. Noting that much education is job-oriented, he said that education would suffer if there was a pattern of going back to school just to get better jobs. He sees a prostitution of educational philosophy, which he said must "go beyond mercantile values."

Next. he worked over the testers with special attention to the

Educational Testing Service, saying that multiple-choice tests have become gatekeepers, from pre-kindergarten to professional licensing. He predicted that 1980 would be rough year for the testers and charged that the tests are bad for student morale.

Nader's suggestions to community educators included the charge that they teach people how to use new information and communications technology to help break the "monopoly of information" wielded by corporate power structures. He talked of his effort to increase the dissemination of good ideas that develop citizen and consumer skills. He said that seller propaganda needs to be counter-balanced by consumer information and urged community educators to get into consumer classes and workshops.

Before he ended, Nader got in a plug for his *"Who Runs Congress?"* pamphlet on how to organize and said, "If you want to work with the citizen and consumer network, we want to work together. You have a good network. We have a good network. I hope we can work together." Although the meshing of the Nader network and the Community Education network is far more easily said than done, it did seem that the community educators accepted the proposition that their agenda should include ways to help consumers achieve greater political power. While he did not address the fact that, in some areas, community education delivered by the schools is almost in competition with community education aimed against "the establishment" and centered on single controversial issues, he did stir the consciences of his listeners, and was, I think, a good choice for keynote speaker.

The Role of Adult Education in Community Education

(December 1979)

It is possible to find a community educator who believes that those who teach adult basic education are part of a delivery system to be supervised by community educators. It is possible to find an ABE teacher who regards community educators as self-appointed bosses who want to order other people to perform the grubby task of teaching problem adults to read and write while the community educators enjoy fun and games.

This is the controversy that was addressed by the national Advisory Council on Adult Education, represented by John Wu, chairman, and Gary Eyre, executive director. Wu left much of the detailed exposition to Eyre, who used to be a community educator himself. Any community educators who came to be insulted left with a challenge.

Eyre believes that community education is a concept and not a program and that there is no national policy on education. He had hoped that Lifelong Learning might be accepted as national policy with learning continuing, as he said, "from the twinkle to the wrinkle." But, he said, Lifelong Learning wound up as wrinkle program, serving an age group where both adult educators and community educators operate.

As Eyre saw it, Community Education should be a delivery system, a means to bring reality to the concept of Lifelong Learning. ABE and other forms of adult education are programs that belong in this delivery system. Eyre disagreed with the

statement in the program that adult education and community education have numerous commonalities and similarity of missions, sticking to the notion that community education is a concept and adult education is a program. But in a sense, he weakened his own point. Suggesting that superintendents of schools be replaced by superintendents of education (involved with learning, not logistics) he warned that declining funds for education might force restructuring and better coordination of education programs in the next decade.

Then he listed societal programs that need to be faced by all educators. These included: economic changes—inflation, personal income management; employment-underemployment, unemployment; big government; crime and personal safety; health and medical care; conservation, energy sources, environmental protection; pre-retirement, retirement, leisure time; lack of public confidence in education and education institutions.

And, though he did not say so, Eyre left the community educators where Nader and Poussaint left them—faced with the task of dealing with changing conditions and changing values in a disturbed and uncertain society.

If the Shoe Fits, Cut Off Your Foot

PART II

1980 - 1987

DEAR MR. STEWART

(JAN.4, 1980)

Dear Mr. Stewart:

Thank you for the kind words and the suggestion for my departing issue. I am not sure there are any ultimate truths about adult learning except that I suspect that most of what adults "know" is obsolescent, obsolete or just plain wrong and I further suspect that this situation applies to me and to the sages of andrology.

I am further persuaded that there is a huge population of citizens who would not have the slightest interest in "The Whole Truth About Adult and Continuing Education." This population would include just about everybody who is not involved in adult education and close to 100 percent of professional adult educators.

Meantime I will continue to permit an occasional fact to mingle with the opinions on the pages of *Adult and Continuing Education Today*, and to be grateful for any kind of reader response.

Sincerely,

Samuel C. Brightman

Note: I had suggested he "let it all hang out" in writing his final column. I think he was irked that I had implied a "final column" might be imminent. (Dave Stewart 3/2/92.)

The New Education Department— "If You Can't Say Something Good..."

(April 1980)

The recent seminar on Federal Policy and the Adult Learner was covered extensively but not completely in your last issue of *ACET*. Your editor, therefore, has included other articles here to provide a more expansive view of that conference.

In one session at the seminar, Peter Relic, acting Assistant Secretary for Education of HEW, candidly discussed the transition from the Office of Education, et al, to the new Department. Relic said he would follow the Administration policy, "If you can't say anything good, don't say anything at all." How well he followed this rule depends upon what you call good. For example he noted that there is "no coherent federal policy on lifelong learning" nor an "incoherent policy," for that matter. Relic stated that President Carter was responsible for the new Department, but the compromises needed to get it through the Congress resulted in something that not even Carter liked in its final form. Relic praised new Secretary Hufstedler as being "as hard-working as Califano (deposed secretary of HEW), sensitive, brilliant—if only she were an educator." Because she is not a professional educator (a good many Washington observers believe this is an asset) Relic said educators should take a hard look at appointments at the Assistant Secretary level. Relic was rough in describing the Office of Management and Budget as opposing

new initiatives and was critical of Congressional interest and understanding in the field of education. Despite all this, Relic thought the new Department might provide a chance to develop rational federal policy on education, including adult learning.

P. Michael Timpane, acting director of the National Institute of Education, rounded out this session with a more upbeat approach, which went somewhat beyond his announced topic of research and development. Conceding that federal bureaucrats may fit the definition of persons with "broad views and narrow responsibilities," he thought that the Secretary of Education has a "do-able job." He noted that education has become more than a rite of passage, with adults now comprising a majority of those enrolled in formal studies. Postsecondary educators, he said, have become aware of this as they have looked around the campus and observed that there aren't as many young students around as there used to be. Timpane noted that a democracy needs "not only literacy but also citizen proficiency" and quoted Harvard educator-politician Stephen Bailey's estimate that the nation is "ill-equipped with persons able to look at problems as a whole, at life as a whole, and the earth as a whole."

EDUCATION FINALLY GETS A SEAT AT THE CABINET TABLE

(JUNE 1980)

The Department of Education has settled down to work after a "Salute to Learning" inaugural week that was a mixture of pomp and ceremony, good intentions, high hopes, symbolic media events and a touch of politicking.

The first installment of the Liz and Shirley Show had an impressive cast that included the President and his family, country singer Loretta Lynn, a nice backdrop (the White House), a new flag and postage stamp, and an inspirational message, "Learning Never Ends." The new Department, which has opted to call itself ED, (better ED than DED was the rationale) got off to a high visibility start, and it appears likely that education will continue to receive more media attention than it did in its previous location between Health and Welfare at DHEW. The Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs, Liz Carpenter, is skilled and imaginative in dealing with the media, and Shirley Hufstedler, the new Secretary, is poised and articulate. She appears to be comfortable in her new role. Most Washington critics thought the Liz and Shirley show got off to a good start.

On the other hand, the *Washington Post*, which had bitterly opposed the creation of the new Department, took it upon itself to be the skeleton at the feast, reminding its readers that the new Department will be functioning with the "old education bureaucracy—or much of it anyway" which the *Post* said had "acquired a certain reputation for sloth and obstructionism rather than

efficiency." It went on to cheer up the new Secretary by noting that "many a reorganization has been rendered irrelevant by the fact that the same people who made the old office unworkable, showed up in the new office."

Adult Educators were visible but not conspicuous during the week's events, and the first week of ED's life didn't provide any reliable clues as to whether the slogan, "Learning Never Ends," would or would not be reflected in new and imaginative approaches to the federal role in adult learning. The important positions within the office of Assistant Secretary for Vocational and Adult Education Daniel Taylor remained unfilled during Salute to Learning Week. Several separate stories in this issue provide additional details about the debut of the new Department.

AEA Criticizes Adult Learning Setup in New Department

(June 1980)

Secretary of Education Hufstedler has indicated that the present organization of the new Department is not frozen in cement and that changes will be made along the way. Still, Washington bureaucrat watchers believe that when a new bureaucracy is created, what you see is what you get for quite a while. As the Department stands at present, the criticisms made by AEA's Gene Whaples seem as valid now as they were when he made these points in a letter to the Secretary:

...The purpose of this letter is to voice our ongoing serious concerns about the fragmentation, lack of human and financial resources, and focus on adult learners as a major constituency of your new Department. Specifically:

- Major programs serving adult learner concerns are disbursed on the reorganizational charts among the offices of Postsecondary Education, Vocational and Adult Education, and Education Research and Improvement.

- Other programs such as Civil Rights, Education of the Handicapped, Social Security, Vocational Rehabilitation, Ethnic Heritage and Bilingual Education can be found in still other offices in your organization.

- (Six percent) of the total budget for FY 80 is allocated to the Office of Vocational and Adult Education when the fastest growing segment of all learners is adults.

- Of the number of total staff projected for each office, the Office of Vocational and Adult Education is the sixth among the seven offices staffed.

- The title of the office of Adult Learning and School Community Relations, we believe, is a move in the right direction. However, its impact is weakened by assignment of only three programs to it. Specifically, the Adult Education Act deals primarily with literacy and competency of adults. The Career Education program has focused, by appropriations mandate, on youth. The Community Schools Program is important and serves some adults, but it is far from comprehensive...

At this juncture, and with your organizational charts in hand, we interpret the following messages for you:

- The Department of Education is primarily concerned with traditional learners and programs and specifically those in the Elementary and Secondary-Postsecondary Education.

- Public input on issues of transition was perhaps seriously solicited but ignored in policy and decision-making.

- The position of adult learners is no more central in the new Department than it was in HEW...

Should The National Football League Become The Role Model for American Society?

(August 1980)

Whether you automatically cheer, boo, or yawn when public education is mentioned, you will find it worthwhile to support your local library by borrowing the March issue of the *Washington Monthly* and reading the article "Sheepskins Are for Sheep," by James Fallows.

The American Society for Training and Development likes the writer's contention that "sports is the only American activity in which performance matters more than anything else." The society also joins Fallows in asking, "Why should the benefits of real performance standards be confined to NFL?"

I know many people who join Fallows in questioning the "connection between competencies and credentials." Many of them might emit a "Right On!" or a cultured "Hear! Hear!" to this statement: "Most public schools are under the domination of the credentialling industry (the teachers colleges) and a union that resists to the death, on-the-job evaluation of real teaching skills."

The article has left me with two ill-defined notions I am going to present, so my readers can rework them into something useful. One notion is that Fallows may have chosen the wrong whipping person. It is my impression that the personnel manager of the Amalgamated Colossus Corporation is the one who has decided that no one will be hired as a janitor without a high school diploma or an equivalency certificate of some kind. That decision was not made by the harassed member of NEA or AFT who has been

teaching high school English for twenty adventure-laden years. Furthermore, it is my impression that adult education has been more performance-oriented than conventional education, but adult education has been forced to provide credentials in order that its clients can get that janitor job from Amalgamated Colossus. I do find myself in sympathy with the argument that credentials, or the lack of them, play too big a role in determining human fate.

My other notion is about Fallows' desire to have the NFL serve as a role model for American society. Fallows has to be kidding, or his brains slipped out of his skull for a few pages. Physical intimidation is probably the most highly valued performance in the NFL. The linebacker or cornerback who can send a few runners or pass receivers to the hospital with a broken neck wins the "respect' of his opponents, the plaudits of the sports writers, the cheers of some fans, and a salary somewhat higher than the annual budget of your neighborhood high school.

Wingspread Conference Discusses Learning Programs to Help the Aged

(December 1980)

"Lifelong Learning for Self-Sufficiency" was the title of a mini-conference held in November near Racine, Wisconsin. The event was held at Wingspread conference center to prepare for the White House Conference on Aging. The mini-conference was sponsored by the Institute of Lifetime Learning of the National Retired Teachers Association/Association of Retired Persons, the Association for Gerontology in Higher Education, the Population Resource Center, and the Commission on Education for Aging of the Adult Education Association.

The group that sought to compress a few years' work into two and a half days included teachers and practitioners who serve the aging, some representatives of organizations of the aged, and a few people like Howard McClusky, with scholarly and real-life experience on the problems of the aged. I was there as a reporter for *ACET* and, since the president of the National Council of Senior Citizens had to cancel at the last moment, as an unofficial representative of NCSC. I serve NCSC as a part-time consultant.

After a welcome by Richard Kinch of the Johnson Foundation staff, Dr. Sandra Timmermann, head of the Institute of Lifetime Learning, sketched a formidable schedule. She also introduced Donald Crawford, a member of the White House Conference on Aging. Crawford described the aged population and how the conference was organized. He didn't hurl many zingers at his audience, and several listeners suggested he was still suffering the post-election

subdues.

Next came Paul A. Kerschner, the associate director of AARP/NRTA who said he asked his three-year-old daughter what she thought was the biggest issue for the aged and got the response, "Lifelong Learning." Than came Jacques O. Lebel, past chairperson of the Commission of Aging of AEA, who did the nuts and bolts work in putting the program together. Lebel told us what was ahead. We were divided into four groups with the special task of developing policy and program recommendations for Surviving, Coping, Growing and Giving. The straw bosses of this operation were as follows: Jeanne Aronson, former director, Older American Program and AACJC; Pauline K. Ragan, Andrus Gerontology Center, University of Southern California; Barbara B. Spencer, Teachers College, Columbia University; Pamela Christoffel, College Board; David Demko, Delta College, Michigan; James Sheffield, Population Resource Center; Rosalie Gilford, California State University, Fullerton; Harry R. Moody, Hunter College; Sean Sweeney, U.S. Administration on Aging; William Hanna, Colorado Division of Aging; Helen Kelley, director, ACTION; and Jacques Lebel, AEA.

Thursday the resource people gave short summaries of the substantial papers they had prepared for the participants. My notes say that someone remarked at this session, "Let's ask ourselves if there are really jobs out there." This comment is noteworthy because the discussions seemed to assume that there were many jobs for the aged who would trouble to learn a job skill. It was also assumed that money from public sources would be available for a variety of fairly expensive programs to assist the aged in learning. It was recognized during the discussions that some of the problems of the aged came from their environment and conditions they could not handle by individual learning. I think more attention could have been paid to this part of the problem.

Anyhow, after this we were all locked up in rooms (under the stern discipline of the "facilitator") and put to work on the issues. I was in the Coping group which took its marching orders from "Iron Hand" Christoffel.

After dinner, we were entertained by a debate titled "Educa-

tion for What." Joseph A. Britton, president of the Association of Gerontology in Higher Education, presided. He started the session by reading the rather outlandish biographies of the contestants. The contestants were Nicholas Johnson, who had a period of fame and/or notoriety in the '60s when he made all the right enemies and some others besides as chairman of the Federal Communications Commission. Johnson is now teaching and heads the National Citizens Communications Lobby. From South Carolina came Reid Buckley, author of *Where to Find Tomorrow.* The debate was somewhat inconclusive. Neither participant talked about the subject.

Friday was the day of the conference's grand finale. At the end of Thursday's deliberations, the facilitator and recorders of each group got together with Ron Gross, the synthesizer. It turned out that the groups were so productive that Gross had to rewrite the synthesis he had prepared on the plane trip from New York to Wisconsin.

I have some mildly negative thoughts about the final document but I suspect that most of the participants would not agree with them. There seemed to be an assumption, despite the talk of self-reliance, that there would be a lot of publicly funded care for the aged, including the provision of generous opportunities for lifelong learning. There seemed to be an assumption that there were plenty of jobs waiting for the aged once they were properly trained. There was much talk about age-integrated and age-irrelevant societies. But most of us seemed to expect that the young would control (and sometimes help) the aged, who had passed from the world of power and authority. There was not enough realization that sometimes it is better to change unpleasant or unjust conditions than to teach the victims to cope with the conditions. For instance, it is better to have safe streets than to teach the aged to cope with crime by locking themselves in their rooms and drawing the blinds. Many at Wingspread seemed to have more faith in what learning might do for the aged than I have, and I have a lot of faith! But I do doubt that an aerobic dancing class could cheer me up much if my wife had died the day before and burglars had ransacked my house while I was at the funeral. Abraham Maslow's comment that when your only tool is a

hammer every problem looks more and more like a nail was cited more than once at Wingspread. Surrounded by educational hammers, this member of the problem population under study began to feel more and more like a nail. But it was an intensive experience and two and a half days well spent!

NOTE: Wingspread was built by Frank Lloyd Wright for the Johnson's wax tycoon. The house is located outside of Racine, Wisconsin and is now operated as a conference center by the Johnson Foundation.

If The Shoe Fits, Cut off Your Foot

(March 9, 1981)

The catatonic ecstasy caused by the first look at the Reagan-Stockman budget cutting program seems to be fading a bit in Congress.

One Washington veteran described the initial enthusiasm this way: "It's like a block where every guy is so happy they are cutting off fire and police protection for his lousy next-door neighbor, that he hasn't had time yet to figure out that they're cutting off his fire and police protection too." He went on to suggest that there were few Congressional districts where the majority of voters are indifferent to every federal program targeted for oblivion or rough handling by the administration.

Perhaps. But the news media and members of Congress seem persuaded that support for the massive cuts is high. There is going to be a long struggle in many quarters. Let us face it, public education seems to be equal in popularity to the legendary fat man driving his Cadillac to the liquor store to buy Chivas Regal with his food stamps on his way to spend the winter in Florida on his unemployment money. (It is believed by the writer that public education is less of a myth and more of a reality than the food stamp boozer.)

Washington education interests are bracing for the fight. A while back, Charlie Lee, the director of the Committee for Full Funding of Education Programs, was almost as lonesome as that washing machine repairman on TV. A recent meeting saw

attendance in the hundreds and network TV coverage. Mid-March is when the details of when and how the cuts will reach Congress. It is then that adult education groups will get down to lobbying specifics. Meantime, Lee notes, shrewd people with an interest in a particular program are writing early letters to their Congressmen and Senators. You might adapt this suggestion to your use. "I want you to know that I support you and our President in your efforts to end useless spending and cut out government waste. I should also take this occasion to thank you for your past support of the productive and efficient adult education (or whatever) program in which I participate and which I know from first-hand experience is turning no-good bums into fine productive citizens. I was disturbed the other day to hear rumors that this program might be changed. Would you please find out if there is a plan to tamper with this vital and cost-effective program and let me hear from you before our Moral Majority conference next Tuesday?"

The Committee for Full Funding of Education Programs publishes a newsletter called Effort that will keep you informed about the pulling and hauling in Washington over education funds. There's going to be a lot of that pulling and hauling this year and next. If you don't subscribe, please consider getting *Effort*. You may obtain a sample copy by writing Effort, 1707 H Street, NW (Fifth Floor), Washington, DC 20006.

LIFELONG LEARNING

(SEPTEMBER 7, 1981)

Lifelong Learning Was Never An Issue In Budget Reconciliation

Adult education, continuing education, lifelong learning (whatever you call the notion that a healthy society depends upon its citizens' continuing to learn after they have served their classroom sentence) was an innocent bystander in the uncharted changes of national course and purpose that occurred in Washington this summer.

No journalists or politicians in the nation's capital claim to understand everything that was changed by the budget reconciliation bill or by the tax cut legislation, both of which Congress passed in haste and confusion. Both measures contain trades and deals that will not be spotted for a long time to come.

Historical allusions are not much help in clarifying matters. Congress and the people who intimidated the Congress with organized telegrams, telephone banks, and a blizzard of canned mail were engaging in a sort of St. Vitus Dance. But the chorea is hard to isolate and identify.

Most experienced Washington journalists believe the two measures signaled a greater change in the federal government and its effect on all of us than the day-to-day coverage indicated. Some will tell you that, whether by skill or by luck, President Reagan put the Congress in the position of apologizing for the democratic process by which legislation is normally adopted—committee hearings, public debate, efforts to anticipate the

impact of the proposed legislation. This normal prudence of the congress somehow came to be depicted as blind, selfish obstruction of the "mandate" the President was said to have received in the elections of 1980. A curious aspect of this was that the communications media were made suspect in many minds of being part of a conspiracy to obstruct the President in carrying out his "mandate." What is curious about this is that the news media were the vehicles by which mistrust of the integrity of the news media was spread. A hundred years from now, historians, psychohistorians, psychologists, and social scientists (if such professions still exist) will be arguing more over why and how than over what happened in Washington in the summer of 1981.

In the days of Roosevelt's and Johnson's legislative triumphs, the Republican position was clear. As Senator Taft once said, "The duty of the opposition party is to oppose." But in this 1981 struggle, the Democrats managed to shoot off their own toes by vacillating between opposing budget cuts and trying to surpass the Republicans in cutting funds for the disadvantaged and providing tax favors for the affluent. The Democratic Congressional delegation, which had maintained discipline and purpose after the Eisenhower landslide, became a panicky mob after the Reagan landslide.

After the action was over, the *New York Times* had this to say:

That the President's plan will revive the economy remains to be proved. What is no longer in doubt is that his economic remedies mask an assault on the very idea that free people can solve their collective problems through representative Government. One day soon Americans will rediscover that their general welfare depends on national as well as parochial actions. And then they will want not just a powerful President but one who cherishes the power of Government to act for the common good.

Perhaps, but when and how? And where was this analysis during the debate? There are other second thoughts. Wall Street and the business community are not so certain as the Reagan Administration professes that Supply Side magic will bring the rabbit of sustained prosperity out of the hat of inflation and unemployment. Most Americans have not yet felt the effects of budget cuts and have not yet learned via a new withholding

schedule that those big tax cuts were not for them but for someone else. Also, a recent news photo showed the president and his budget director smiling as they discussed new cuts far more severe than those just made, cuts that mean severe reductions in Social Security, Medicare and/or defense expenditures. That is when the test will come. Will austerity be as popular in the specific as it was in the abstract? Will austerity for me be as popular with me as austerity for you was popular with me?

There is another area in which second-guessing seems apparent. The legislation and legislation repeal embodied in the budget reconciliation bill included a lot of grouping of human service programs into blocks, but not nearly as much as the president wanted. Thus the federal adult education state grants program was originally destined to become part of a block but was later allowed to retain its categorical status. But now the Administration is going to make another attempt to get into blocks programs that escaped in the first go-around. There will undoubtedly be another struggle over the fate of the relatively modest $100 million a year adult education program. Recently the governors met and indicated some disenchantment with block grants. The reason: the federal government says that by putting a group of programs into a block, it allows the states to decide how much to spend on each. But the funds of each program were cut, usually by twenty-five percent, before they are put into the block package. The governors said this meant the states weren't really given any useful authority, yet the states would be blamed for the cuts in the programs, regardless of how they divided funds. The governors know that, if they take money from one program and put it in another, the enmity of those who took the cuts will persist long after the gratitude of the beneficiaries has evaporated.

There may be some second thoughts on block grants. Incidentally, the federal community education program, with low funding, is now part of a block. Community educators are organizing to fight for funds at the state level. It seems too early to guess how effective they will be.

Title I of the Higher Education act wound up with $8 million for educational outreach, statewide planning, and information services. This budget works out to about $145,000 for each state

and puts this program, like Community Education with only $3 million, in a barely-staying-alive category.

The Vocational Education Act and the Adult Education Act, both scheduled for extensive hearings before reauthorization, were extended to 1984 in the reconciliation bill. Some observers wonder if authorizing committees will return to the practice of careful scrutiny and long hearings in connection with reauthorization legislation. The final fate may be determined in a budget reconciliation measure, with the committee experts on the matter having little say in the final disposition. The same question applies to the hearings on appropriations legislation. Some observers think Congress may never be the same. Others are not so sure. They think that the public will become disenchanted with Supply Side, which they think will produce a serious depression, and that the pendulum will swing more power than ever back to the Congress.

But you can find others who say that, no matter how the power balance shifts between the President and Congress, the people who control the Congress will be the people who purchase TV spots to intimidate Congressmen, not the constituents and constituent groups which base their strength on the merits of their case and the number of their members. District politicking by TV spots means those with the most money have the most clout. This, these observers say, means that the special interest PAC's have more power than the political parties.

With all of this flux and confusion on the political scene, might it be useful in this democracy for voting adults to have greater opportunity for learning that would increase their political skills, and enhance their ability to understand and participate in politics?

It is an unasked question, and it is not likely that any important politician is about to ask it soon. Now, more than ever before, it seems that Lifelong Learning is a solution for an unseen problem, the answer to an unasked question. But at least the federal adult basic education program did manage to survive, only a little weaker from a loss of fiscal blood.

All About The Big Do at San Antonio

(December 13, 1982)

Event number 387 at the 1982 National Adult Education Conference at San Antonio was a meeting of the new board of the new American Association for Adult and Continuing Education. It took place in the late morning and early afternoon of the Tuesday following its start on the preceding Thursday and so much had been crammed into those days that some of us felt as though we had been in Texas for a month. The Sun Belt favored us with clouds and rain on departure day but this failed, to coin a phrase, to dampen the spirits of the departing conferees. Even your reporter, with the knee where the cartilage has turned to gravel throbbing from the endless walking up and down stairs in a convention arena designed by an architect who thought escalators were appropriate only in the effete east, is prepared to state that it was a fine start for the new organization.

Two of the plenary sessions featured lecture circuit type speakers and both of their trumpets gave forth an uncertain sound to this listener. A third plenary session featuring adult educators from overseas was poorly attended, with conferees deciding, apparently, to focus on matters that would improve their lot here at home, which was in one form or other, what most of the presentations offered to the patrons of the giant intellectual flea market.

There was some discussion in corridors and hotel lobbies of how the content of the conference could be improved. There

always is. Some things your reporter heard being talked about: Should there be a theme? This year's conference was to celebrate the formation of AACE but the 1983 meeting in Philadelphia will have a theme: Declaration of Interdependence. Will this, should this be the spine of the conference? Or should it be the topic of a vacuous speech or two and otherwise ignored?

Should keynote speeches and other plenary sessions be used for purposes other than entertainment? Should there be more plenary gatherings of conference registrants with widely disparate skills, goals and interests? Should there be more quality control of the presentations? More consistency control? More quantity control? More or fewer big sessions, more or fewer smaller gatherings?

Example: John Holden was leaving a sparsely attended seminar on assertiveness training for the elderly as I was entering it. No doubt we both will be the better for it, but should the conference have a program that seems to have done little more than help Humble Holden and Bashful Brightman? Someone even wondered out loud whether a few of the presentations might provide more benefit to those who conducted them than to those who attended them.

What about the cost to attend the conference? All adult educators, being among God's chosen people, deserve, of course, to enjoy the comfort of $72-a-day hotel rooms, but not all of us could afford those rates in vogue at the two biggest convention hotels. Travel was not cheap for those who came from the east coast or west coast. And coming up is the ABE Commission session in Alaska. There were expressed worries about the high cost of conferencing these days.

This self-questioning is a sign of vitality and it was welcomed, because the gadflies who have been rallying behind the banner of opposition to mandatory continuing education to sound off on a wide variety of social issues were pretty subdued at San Antonio.

Overall, I think this maybe was the best national conference I have attended. This evaluation is neither because I received a modest award, nor despite the fact that the mattress was sprung at my inexpensive motel or that the Trans World Airline, hungry for mention in *ACET*, lost my luggage. When my portable

typewriter was finally returned from this kidnaping it was sorely wounded but the basic metal components had held fast and the machine was shaky but functioning. I am proud of it. TWA may have a thing about adult education. The last time I flew that airline on an adult education mission it lost my luggage. So stay tuned. If TWA ever flies me without losing my bags I will be sure to let you know. And now for cheerier notes.

There was hot coffee, cold fizz drinks, handouts, a phone that worked, and a volunteer on hand in the press room. Frank Spikes and his helpers were industrious and effective. The people attending the adult education conference were, on the whole, more fashionably dressed than the customers at the Junior League Rummage Sale going on at the same time, same place as the conference.

Some Questions for 1983 and Beyond

(January 24, 1983)

Recently I got around to a careful reading of an address by Wendell Smith at the Midwest Research Conference and it was apparent that our viewpoints are not the same. He looks at the field from inside the profession, as an academic practitioner. I look at it from outside, as a journalist. We both look at it as active citizens. It may not be fair to Wendell, but I have a feeling he looks mainly to adult educators for answers to his questions. I look mainly elsewhere—to politicians, to the communications media, to those who collect and analyze public opinion.

He asks: "How do we keep abreast of research needs in light of continued educational, economic, social and political change?"

I ask, of all education: "Why can't you do more to help the adult electorate govern itself more successfully; why can't you help us to achieve more benign and less malignant results from technological progress?" (My question might be clearer to you if I tell you I feel the entire American education community blew it on television. It has failed to realize anything close to TVs potential for educating us; it has failed to help us avoid the changes for the worse that TV has brought to our society.)

He asks: "What will be the impact of future technologies (electronic media, computers, etc.) on lifelong learners of tomorrow?"

I ask: "How can a smart fellow like Wendell ask a dumb question like that?" That is like a doctor asking, "What will be the

impact of future epidemics of bubonic plague on the patients of tomorrow?"

I want to know how education can help us to use these technologies wisely. More important, I want to know why education is not even asking, "How can we shape a better future?" but instead is asking, "What kind of future are the technologies going to impose upon us and how can we cope with it?

I think this is enough to show the difference between our perspectives. There is nothing wrong with Wendell's questions. We need scholarly research about adult learning and we need people like him in adult education. Moreover, he can earn a comfortable living asking his questions, and my questions might at best get him a few pokes with a sharp stick.

Once my father asked me about why college was important and I guess I mumbled something about a good job and a nice home. He suggested I might learn how to think for myself and gain enough self-confidence to try it a few times in my adult years.

My father was dead when I graduated from Journalism School. I don't remember much about the commencement speeches but something that one teacher said there has stuck in my mind: "A good newspaper tells the truth about the present in its news columns and it has an editorial page that asks the right questions about the future."

But who reads newspapers in this era of high tech electronics?

I have just reread these paragraphs and they read like I intended to give Wendell Smith an unfair working over. Not so. His questions inspired me to submit my questions. I hope that Wendell Smith and some other adult educators will respond to them.

And maybe comment on the competency speech.

SIBLEY MEMORIAL HOSPITAL, WASHINGTON, D.C. SATURDAY, APRIL 16

(MAY 2, 1983)

The rest of this issue is copy that has been kept in reserve for when I goof off and didn't meet the deadline (or it was written by the crew in Kansas).

When I went to bed on April 12 I made a mental note to call my doctor and insist that he take time to deal with my worsening chest congestion in person not over the phone. The next morning the congestion was so heavy I couldn't cough up mucus or breathe air through it. So I swallowed my pride and asked my wife to call the rescue squad. We got to the emergency room in time. Now I am out of the Intensive Care Unit, off of oxygen, and have only one tube still stuck into me. I am now allowed to eat solid food, hospital grade. I am tired, but my chronic bronchitis and emphysema seem to be both under control—debilitating but not incapacitating.

As many of you remember, I am a great believer in learning by doing but, in this instance, it has been suggested that I came close to over-doing.

Well, some of you are aware that I am not a high tech fan. The notion that the whole world can put on white or green laboratory jackets and enjoy prosperity and full employment by playing with high tech toys strikes me as absurd. But hey. I really dig some of the high tech stuff they wired me into after

they explained that some of those flicking digits and squiggles were life signs.

I hadn't been helpless sick in a hospital for more than 20 years. They've added a lot of high tech electronics since then but hospitals are still labor intensive operations. The economic and social gap between the operator of the sophisticated heart echo machine and the Central American girl with the mop is great. And the economic, social and political problems this gap creates and will magnify are going to confront and challenge adult education for the rest of the century. But don't try to study these problems by ceasing to breathe. It gives you no special insight.

I was talking to the operator of the echo machine about something I heard at the San Antonio Conference, namely, that America's military forces were becoming the biggest trainer of the technical skills that will be increasingly needed in a high tech world. The operator said he had 10 years of military training. Small world and all that!

Today was a big day. I had real food at breakfast, and they cut my last umbilical cord, and I can go to the bathroom without a retinue of IV stand bearers and the oxygen going in is out of my nose. Free at last! Sort of.

You readers who have been working earnestly to increase my humility quotient can relax for a few days. The week of April 10 did a lot to discourage my incipient hubris.

On Sunday the main sewer line clogged, doing unspeakable things to the first floor of our house. Monday the plumbers came and ran our last viable credit card right up to its ceiling. Tuesday I worked on tax returns and felt sorry for myself. Wednesday I went to the hospital. Thursday I was still tired and tubed and confused in Intensive Care. I signed a $5,000 loan application to pay my income tax. Friday I got moved to a regular room. I signed my tax returns and my wife deposited them at the main post office on her way to the Folger Theater where she has been performing in "Marriage a la Mode." In real life, her marriage this week has gotten into modes Dryden never dreamed of. Anyhow, all the hassle and pressure had her so upset that she left the engine running in her car all during the performance. Fortunately, the car wasn't stolen (a few readers have seen our cars and they will

understand why they don't get stolen). Anyhow, she cut the engine when she went out after the performance. Four hours on idle had done the battery in. She had to call the auto club for a jump start. She has two performances today and Sunday. Monday my tests should be finished and maybe I can go home on Tuesday. By then the sewer line ought to be stopped up again, right?

FOOTNOTE: I am in receipt of a floral tribute, of sorts, I think: two cactus plants embellished with a plastic pitch fork. It is an impressive display and must have wiped out the life savings of John Ohliger, Ron and Bea Gross, Kay Garrett, Karen Stevenson, and Bill Draves, the donors.

"Does this hint," one of the nurses inquired, "That you are not always the shy, considerate, and gentle model of unselfish deportment that you have been since your arrival here?"

DEJA VU

(MAY 16, 1983)

The two biggest flurries of Page One coverage of American education problems since the Sputnik shock in the '50s have occurred during the stewardship of Terrel Bell, a quiet man who seems to shun media attention.

The first Page One bonanza took place in 1975 when the Adult Performance Level study of the Office of Education was released. This study purported to show that one out of five American adults was functionally illiterate—lacked the competencies necessary to function in our complicated society. Bell, who was then U.S. Commissioner of Education, reported somewhat bemusedly that he let himself be talked into holding a press conference to announce the findings, then worried that nobody would come to the conference. But come they did and the report got big Page One headlines and time on the national network TV news shows. This was followed by a good supply of tongue-clucking editorials. Also, as Bell told his friends, by a scolding from the White House. Why hadn't he emphasized the good news? he was asked. It seems the Nixon Administration thought it was good news that four out of five adults could make it across the street without help from the Boy Scouts.

But despite this publicity there was no great thrust forward in adult basic education, no great expansion of opportunity for illiterate adults to learn to read, write and perform simple computations. Those are the skills that the staunch supporter of

federal education programs, Congressman Carl Perkins of Kentucky, said he believed adults needed to be taught in order for them to gain skills and competencies they must have to be able to earn a living and make the decisions required for self-government.

In any event, the publicity engendered by the APL study faded away without inspiring any memorable national effort. It did make Competency Based Adult Education important enough to have its very own national conference, and it also inspired some nonadmirers of CBAE to suggest that APL did more to help Competency Based Adult Educators than it did to help illiterate adults. It enabled me to spend a few pleasant days in the New Orleans suburb of Metairie and to write pages of indignant rhetoric about the urgent need for expanded funding of adult basic education programs, so I am personally grateful for the APL project.

The Democratic Platform: Adults Get Last Paragraph

(August 20, 1984)

Adult education gets a mention in the last paragraph of the education section in the Democratic platform as follows: "Finally, all our educational institutions must adapt to growing numbers of adults returning to school to upgrade their skills, acquire new skills, prepare themselves for entirely new occupations, and enrich their lives."

The "returning to school" phrase may discourage some adult educators who have been promoting the notion that adults can learn in venues other than the classroom, but I take it to be a fair warning to colleges and universities that they are going to have to put up with more and more grown-ups invading the campus and jostling the ivy.

A lot of words are devoted to education in the long Democratic platform. Here are some samples:

We Democrats are committed to equity in education. We will insist on excellence, discipline, and high standards. Quality education depends on students, teachers and parents performing at the highest levels of achievement.

We know that every dollar we invest in education is ultimately returned to us six-fold. We know that the education of our citizens is critical to our democracy.

There are four key goals that a Democratic program for educational excellence must address: strengthening local capacity to innovate and progress in public education and encourage

parental involvement; renewing our efforts to ensure that all children, whatever their race, income, or sex have a fair and equal chance to learn; attracting the most talented young people into teaching and enabling them to remain and develop in their profession; and ensuring that all American families can send their children on to college or advanced training.

Primary and Secondary Education—While education is the responsibility of local government, local governments already strapped for funds by this Administration cannot be expected to bear alone the burden of undertaking the efforts we need for quality education—from teacher training, to the salaries needed to attract and retain able teachers, to new labs, to new programs to motivate talented and gifted students, to new ties between businesses and schools—without leadership at the federal level.

Democrats will provide that leadership. We call for the immediate restoration of the cuts in funding of education programs by the Reagan Administration, and for a major new commitment to education. We will create a partnership for excellence among federal, state and local governments. We will provide incentives to local school districts to concentrate on science, math, communications and computer literacy; to provide access to advanced technology. In all of these fields, but particularly in computers, there is a growing danger of a two-tier education system. The more affluent districts have adequate hardware and teachers prepared to use it. Many districts are left completely behind or saddled with a modern machine but no provision for faculty training. Every American child should have the basic education that makes computer literacy possible and useful.

Vocational education should be overhauled to bring instructional materials, equipment, and staff up-to-date with the technology and practices for the work place and target assistance to areas with large numbers of disadvantaged youth.

Education is an important key to the upward mobility of all citizens and especially the disadvantaged, despite the fact that racial discrimination and other prejudices have set limits to such achievement.

We will emphasize the importance of preventing one-third of

our student body nationwide from dropping out of school in the first place.

Recognizing that young people who are never given an opportunity for a job will be less likely to hold one in adulthood, we will also emphasize training and employment opportunities for youth. In so doing, we need to establish a genuine working partnership with the private sector.

Private schools, particularly parochial schools, are also an important part of our diverse educational system. Consistent with our tradition, the Democratic Party accepts its commitment to constitutionally acceptable methods of supporting the education of all pupils in schools which do not racially discriminate, and excluding so called segregation academies. The Party will continue to support federal education legislation which provides for the equitable participation in federal programs of all low and moderate income pupils.

For its part, when added to the traditional educational institutions of family, school and church, television has enormous promise as a teacher. When children spend more time in front of the television set than they do in the classroom, we must ask how television can help children, and why commercial broadcasters do so little programming for children today despite their legal responsibility as "public trustees" of the airwaves granted to them.

Higher Education—We will make certain that higher education does not become a luxury affordable only by the children of the rich.

The Democratic party reaffirms the importance of historically Black colleges.

We must encourage colleges and universities to train more scientists and engineers. More than one hundred years ago the Morrill Land Grant Act provided for agricultural colleges and programs that today still help keep American agriculture the world leader. We need a similar program today to encourage the training of scientists and engineers. At the same time, we must not neglect the arts and humanities, which enrich our spirit. The private sector must also recognize its responsibility to join partnerships which strengthen our diverse public and private

higher education system...

The incoherency in these excerpts reflects the incoherency of the whole section, which reads like a cut-and-paste job of material presented by a variety of education special interests and membership groups. It appears to be addressed to educators and not to the general electorate. The sentence that AAACE wanted in the platform was not included, but it was unclear and badly written enough to have fitted right in. In case you have forgotten, here is the AAACE sentence:

"The goal of the United States of America shall be the provision of the fullest educational opportunity for every American adult by pledging support to strengthen the adult and continuing education programs of public schools, community and junior colleges, minorities, libraries and volunteer citizen organizations."

This seems to be a well-intentioned effort to write a sentence that would please all the constituencies in AAACE. It inspires some questions. What is the "fullest educational opportunity"? Would "pledging support" strengthen the programs? Would strengthening the programs provide the "fullest educational opportunity" for all Americans? Would any money need to be appropriated to provide the "fullest educational opportunity?"

The Democratic platform and the adult education section that did not get included are vague expressions of good intentions. Good intentions are not policy. Goals are not programs. Imperatives negotiated at conferences like the Lifelong Learning one at Wingspread in 1976 do not seem to make much difference outside the educational community unless somebody enacts a statute and appropriate some funds.

Are adult educators in any way to blame for the failure of the Democratic platform writers to include adult and continuing education in the special education interests the platform promises to serve? I suggest looking at an article Leonard P. Oliver wrote for the November 1983, issue of *Lifelong Learning*, which includes these words:

"...the overriding issue we face as adult educators is our lack of a meaningful and important social purpose integrated with the realities of national life...lacking a commonly held sense of

purpose, we will never be a strong movement living up to our full potential, and we will never have a coherent, recognizable national public policy for adult education."

I am not sure I agree with all of this but it raises an issue that should be addressed seriously and in some detail at the Louisville AAACE Conference and at state conferences. With some outsiders taking part.

Ring Out The Old, Ring in The New

(September 17, 1984)

The change in the content and appearance of this publication affords me an excuse for some personal paragraphs.

For almost 15 years I have been editing *Adult and Continuing Education Today*, long enough that should I arrive at the Pearly Gates there is the possibility that St. Peter might ask about some of the complaints I have received from subscribers.

Most of the complaints have been valid. Most of my mail from subscribers has been interesting. Under the new format we will have room for letters from our readers. I know it will turn into a lively forum.

I have worried about the small type we have been forced to use in recent issues. It was too small for the page-width columns. If we had to use small type, I wanted it to be in narrower columns. It is easier for the eye to bring a narrow line of small type to the brain than it is for it bring a wide line. The three-column format will be easier to read.

The wider column will be missed by me for one reason: three-column makeup is more akin to newspaper and magazine layout; the page-width column is akin to the personal letter. I have tried to edit *Adult and Continuing Education Today* as if it were a letter to my friends containing news of interest to them along with any comments, overt or implied, that I thought might also interest them.

Strangely, most publications that call themselves newsletters

are written more like a newspaper than like a letter.

The letter tone of *ACET* has baffled some new readers, irritated, sometimes infuriated some regular readers, and won me some friends I have never seen: A new subscriber who wrote after looking at her first issue of *ACET*:

"At last...a newsletter that reads as if it's written by a real person, for real people."

That is what I have tried to write—a letter about adult education to friends who are interested in that subject and interested in a good many other matters that pertain to the general welfare and their functioning as a citizen.

I wish all of us, myself included, devoted more time to reading and writing letters. Recently a newsletter called "Letter from Paris," printed as the lead article in its June issue an article headed: "D-DAY PLUS 40 YEARS June 6, 1944—Sam Brightman Remembers." Actually it was not a new article written in 1984. It was a combination of two letters written back to the states within a month of the invasion of Normandy. I am glad that I took the time to write the letters, one to a journalist classmate who is now the retired president of ABC News, the other to my family. I think they give much more of the flavor of the action than if I had written them in the "who-what-where-when" journalistic style I had used as a Washington correspondent for a daily newspaper. (I can send you a photocopy if you send a self-addressed stamped envelope.)

The Letter from Paris printed the account in a three-column format but the writing is in my page-width letter style, not my narrow-column journalistic style. Well, under our new format, I'm going to try to keep on writing as though the columns were a full-page wide, the width of a personal letter.

Meantime, the three-column format will be easier to read. There will be articles I do not have the skills or resources to produce. You, gentle reader, are going to be a lot better off.

And there will be room for your letters. Publisher Draves and I are looking forward to getting a lot of letters that will be, as Draves puts its, "better reading than your copy and won't cost me a cent." Don't let him down.—SB.

CAEO Holds Last Show-And-Tell of 1984

(November 12, 1984)

The Board of the Coalition of Adult Education Organizations held its final show-and-tell sessions for 1984 at the American Council of Education headquarters in Washington, DC, in late October. A varied plentitude was shown and told and enlightenment abounded, as is the norm.

David Stewart led a discussion of three American Council on Education guidelines on campus-business linkages, for a courseware evaluation checklist and for credit/noncredit decisions. These are important documents with big words and you can get them by writing Hank Spille (Henry A. Spille, that is) at the Office of Educational Credit and Credentials, American Council on Education, One Dupont Circle, Washington, DC 20036.

Ed Czarnecki of the AFL-CIO and Jack Mackenzie of the University and College Labor Education Association described adult education activities in worker's organizations. There's a lot of that going on but not as much as there ought to be, particularly in the case of free tuition benefits that are not used.

The peachiest presentation of the two-days of meetings was made by Gary S. Wilsher of the National Geographic Society, which claims to be the largest nonprofit educational institution in the world. He showed all kinds of beautiful samples of the stuff you can get from National Geographic or see and hear at their new building. The National Geographic produces what many consider to be the best color printing in the United States and maybe in the

world.

Rick Ventura, the executive director of the National Advisory Council on Adult Education, reported that the Coalition for Literacy is about to break its big national advertising campaign. Bill Shannon, executive director of the National Advisory Council on Continuing Education, said that Senator Hatch has put the old continuing Education Title I back into a draft of the Higher Education Act.

Jack Mackenzie gave an extensive report on an international adult education conference held in Moscow and there was also a report by Rick Henstrom on activities of the International Associates. To learn more about these matters you can write Mackenzie at University of the District of Columbia, Labor Studies Center, 724 Ninth St. NW, Suite 500, Washington, DC 20001, or call (202) 727-2326.

FULL MOON TIME IN WASHINGTON

(DECEMBER 10, 1984)

The kind of crazies who normally come out only on Halloween or when the moon is full are on display in Washington and they will continue to scare us all to death with their trick-or-treat proposals until the fiscal 1986 budget is locked up and the State of the Union message is composed.

Every day people in Washington read the leaks from the bureaucracy and the conservative foundation proposals in *The New York Times* and the *Washington Post* and try to separate the trial balloons from serious plans. It is hard to tell which is what and the safest thing is to attempt to shoot down anything that seems to threaten your turf.

As this is written there is some alarm in Washington over a scheme to get the U.S. out of the flight control field and turn guidance systems over to private enterprise. That means that the same skills that created that massive traffic snarl in your local shopping center parking lot the Friday and Saturday after Thanksgiving will be directing planes in and out of O'Hare and LaGuardia. You could be stacked up forever if the credit card of your pilot had expired or other planes kept outbidding him for the next runway.

One of the President's favorite foundations is proposing that the Department of Education be reduced to the equivalent of a "Three-room schoolhouse." One "room" would distribute block grants to the states for elementary and secondary education and

would wholesale money to colleges who could retail it to the students. Another "room" would gather statistics. The third "room" would be a "bully pulpit" that could expound "sound ideas" with no authority to do anything about them.

Don't snicker. The foundation that dreamed this one up claims that nearly two-thirds of its 1980 suggestions have been or are being transformed into policy by the Reagan administration.

Organizations representing the kind of people who were blackballed from the Flat Earth Society for being weird seem to be riding high these days. Building a space station is going to be given a higher priority than fixing the potholes in the federal highway system. The new station would be flat, like the earth.

The two leading candidates to replace retiring Terrel Bell as Secretary of Education seem to be William J. Bennett, chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities, and John R. Silber, president of Boston University. The White House cooperated in setting up an appearance by both of them before a sort of conservative kangaroo court.

It must have been a fun gathering. You have to wonder how they answered when the chairman said, "It's good to know that you both agree that the earth is flat and now maybe each of you can say how you feel about the unproven theory of evolution."

Meantime the trial balloons continue to rise and everybody from senior citizens to pre-schoolers is going to be frightened as the administration tests to see what programs it can cut or eliminate with the least political damage.

The safest thing to do is scream loudly to your Congressman and Senators no matter how silly the threatening proposals may sound. And maybe pray that when they put prayer into the classroom they will leave a few spares around for airline passengers landing at a free-enterprise Stapleton Field at Denver in a blizzard.

Education Department Isn't Getting All of the Crazies

(May 27, 1985)

They haven't dumped all the crazies on the Department of Education and this has given the Secretary of Education a respite from unfavorable headlines. He put out a statement on the second anniversary of "A Nation at Risk," the publication of the National Commission on Excellence in Education, which came right out and said point blank and without qualification, "All of us bear a responsibility to make American schools great." So far, there has been no unfavorable response to this bold statement.

The revelation that the Education Department doesn't have all the weirdos occurred when it was discovered that a woman recently approved by the Senate for the $70,000-a-year chairmanship of the Copyright Royalty Tribunal was co-author of a book which said blacks "insist on preserving their jungle freedoms, their women, their avoidance of personal responsibility and their abhorrence of the work ethic" and that sociologists "put blacks on welfare so they can continue their jungle freedoms of legal time and subsidized procreation." The woman's name was Marianne Mele Hall and after a few days a White House spokesman announced she had resigned—without any White House pressure, of course.

The three persons who left the Department of Education, also by resignation, were Eileen Gardner and Lawrence Uzzell, two recently hired advisers to the Secretary, and Thomas G. Moore, deputy assistant secretary for public affairs, its press

spokesman.

Gardner and Uzzell oppose the federal program for handicapped children and Uzzell opposes the existence of the department. When Senators challenged their views, Bennett hollered "character assassination" but soon backed off and the two resigned. Moore, who tried to get Bennett to fight harder for the two, was also a "voluntary" resignation.

The *Wall Street Journal* and other conservative publications took the side of Gardner and Uzzell but one voice that is usually heard loud and clear on the right wing side was raised against Dr. Gardner. It belonged to columnist George Will, who has a son with Down's syndrome, as has Senator Lowell Weicker, who raised the issue of Gardner's views in the Senate.

Here is how Dr. Gardner blamed the handicapped for their plight.

"They (the handicapped) falsely assume that the lottery of life has penalized them at random. This is not so. Nothing comes to an individual that he has not, at some point in his development, summoned. Each of us is responsible for his life situation." And, "There is no injustice in the universe. As unfair as it may seem, a person's external circumstances do fit his level of inner spiritual development...Those of the handicapped constituency who seek to have others bear their burdens and eliminate their challenges are seeking to avoid the central issues of their lives."

Apparently this was too much even for Secretary Bennett and his White House superiors.

Another Education Reform Ignores Adult Education

(July 8, 1985)

The Carnegie Corporation has established something called the "Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy" and the CAEO Board heard an interesting account of its ambitious plans from its executive director at its June meeting. The board did not hear, despite questioning by Board Members, of any intention to use adult educators or adult education in the operation.

The presentation was made by Marc Tucker, a former associate director of the National Institute of Education, who heads the Washington office set up to operate the Forum. He reported on interviewing three groups at the start of the project. He said economists and heads of big research universities thought the economic prospects were good and that education was doing a good job and responding well to change. No big problem, no need for concern.

The second group was educators in public institutions. They thought they had been getting a bum rap in some of the current eduction reform documents and wondered why they were asked about the future economy.

The third group came from business, industry and labor

organizations, people close to the economic hardships that have afflicted some businesses and industries and their workers. They were worried. They thought education might be the deciding factor in international trade competition.

It was the old story of "where you sit determines where you stand." The last group was sitting in the midst of real-life troubles.

So who is Carnegie going to reform first? Once again it is the classroom teacher, trying to do what the administrators want, trying to do what the parents want, and trying to do a little successful teaching. The Carnegie project is going to concentrate on improving teachers. Tucker mentioned that students in elementary school are not required to write, to prepare papers. Some CAEO Board members found it hard to imagine strong support for more writing by the students from administrators and parents who would themselves be hard put to compose a coherent sentence, let alone a coherent paragraph. Still, the Forum has $600,000 to spend its first year and a bundle of good intentions. The project was announced a few months ago by David A. Hamburg, president of the Carnegie Corporation.

Projected to have a 10-year life, the announcement read, the forum will bring together leading Americans to help chart a course for education policy that reflects a world economy transformed by science and technology.

The forum will address issues concerning education and its relationship to the economy for people of all ages and in all institutional settings. Each year, it will sponsor an invitational meeting of 100 prominent Americans from business, labor, government, education, and the scientific community to consider the issues and options linking education policy with future economic needs.

Between the annual meetings, the forum will monitor national education progress, convene workshops, conduct analytical studies, issue reports, and work with other groups and policy-makers addressing similar problems.

For further information write to Marc Tucker, Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy, Suite 301, 1001 Connecticut Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20036 or call 202/463-0747.

PICK YOUR CAPTION

(OCTOBER 14, 1985)

Choice 1:

Coalition of Adult Education Organizations Opens Waxwork Exhibit at National Adult Education Center in Nation's Capitol—Wax statues depicting an exciting moment at a board meeting of the Coalition of Adult Education Organizations were unveiled at the National Adult Education Center located in the American Council on Education Building at One Dupont Circle in Washington, DC. The wax statues depict a visit by Mrs. Barbara Bush to receive the organization's annual award for a contribution to adult learning. Mrs. Bush is married to the Vice President of the United States. From left to right: Anthony F. Farma, United States Association of Evening Studies; Edgar R. Czarnecki, AFL-CIO; Mrs. Bush; James F. Gollattscheck, American Association of Community and Junior Colleges; Yvonne K. Rappaport, American Association for Adult and Continuing Education; Judy Koloski, AAACE.

Choice 2:

Controversial Awards Ceremony breaks up in fist fight—Members of the board of the Coalition of Adult Education Organizations came to blows in a bitter fight over the presenting of the CAEO Outstanding service Award of 1985 to Mrs. George Bush, wife of the Vice President of the United States. The Bushes

have a dog that writes books and they gave some of his royalties to Laubach Literacy and Literacy Volunteers. Mrs. Bush conducted herself with dignity during the fierce struggle. From left, about to throw paper, Anthony F. Farma, Association of Evening Studies; with hands raised to ward off blow, Edgar R. Czarnecki, AFL-CIO; Mrs. Bush; pulling club from underneath table, James F. Gollatscheck, AAACJC; Hulk Hogan fans Yvonne K. Rappaport and Judy Koloski, AAACE.

SAM BRIGHTMAN'S MILWAUKEE

(NOVEMBER 25, 1985)

First things first! Fortunately for me, the Educational Media 7 Technology Unit's luncheon honoring the editor of *ACET* for surviving 15 years of association with perpetrators of adult education was held the first day of AAACE Conference at Milwaukee. This permitted me to cover the rest of the conference without being distracted by apprehension about what my well-wishers were going to say at the luncheon.

Actually I got off easy. David Gueulette was a nonacerbic presiding officer. Malcolm Knowles was his usual gentle self. John Ohliger read a scholarly bibliography of ill-advised things I have written over the years. Sy Barasch's plane from New York got him there just in time to get in a few sentences before the gathering adjourned.

Throughout the proceedings the honored guest was fixed in the beady gaze of Mary Grefe, former chairman of the national Advisory Council on Adult Education, and of Gary Eyre, former executive director of that body and now an American Council on Education executive. They were visibly agitated that they were denied the chance to take a few shots at the honored guest, who feels they are entitled and promises to use Bill Draves' money to take them to lunch at the national Press Club and let them unload. Others who feel they were unfairly deprived of a shot will have to write their insults down and mail them to me. We will print the choicest ones in *ACET*, subject to Postal Regulations.

In my remarks at the luncheon I cited as a ray of hope for the future of America the fact that a woman named She had defeated a man named Buster in the election that week for attorney general of the Commonwealth of Virginia. Because Virginia has long been a notorious heel-dragger in newfangled things like rights for women and blacks, I expressed the thought that we might be moving toward the day when a woman might win over a man named Billy Bob in an election in Mississippi. I am told that I stepped all over my tongue in this part of my remarks and baffled my listeners. I hope this clears things up, and I apologize to my listeners. I may not be retiring, but I am shy when I try to speak in public and it shows, it shows.

The theme of the 1985 National Adult Education Conference was "Lifelong Learning: Key to Living." If anybody addressed this either in a small group session or at a plenary meeting, I missed it.

I suspect it does not mean what it says. I am hard put to find anyone still breathing and conscious who does not learn something every day. But what they learn may not be the key to living. On the other hand, living is usually a key to learning. People learn how to make pipe bombs, how to roar through yellow lights at busy intersections, how to go over Niagara Falls in a barrel. These may not be as conducive to living as are lessons on speaking softly to bigger people and avoiding using a match to check the level of the gas tank in your car. Most of the people I hear talking about lifelong learning tend to mean learning supervised by an accredited educator, and in the back of their minds they regard this as much a key to the teacher's survival as a key to the learner's survival.

The long questionnaire about the conference, the evaluation sheet, didn't try to find out whether the conferees found out anything about the conference theme. Some of the questions made me think about the man who was asked how his wife was and responded, "compared to what?"

It would be nice to know why all those people came to the conference and if they got what they came for. I suspect if all respondents were completely candid the "not applicable" or "none of the above" circles would be filled in more than any other

answer.

There was one general session, not very heavily attended, where the Junto recommendations were discussed. That is good, but it still leaves 2,000 people spending a few days together, sampling a wide variety of material, and then going home with no new purpose for themselves or AAACE. Might it be useful for some of the Junto ideas to be put into specific resolutions and debated and negotiated by the conference the way a political party negotiates its platform?

I am fully aware that it might not be useful, that it might take up a lot of time with bickering and split the association more than it brought it together. But I leave most national adult education conferences with a nagging feeling that more might somehow have been accomplished than was accomplished. The 1982 conference was an exception. It had a purpose: to merge two shaky organizations into one solid organization. At the least it merged two shaky organizations into one less shaky one, one that produced a balanced budget in 1985! The American Constitutional Convention, for all the favorable reviews it has received over the years, failed to produce a balanced budget in 1985!

They are getting more younger people at the NAEC. One of the giveaways I picked up in the busy exhibit area at Milwaukee was a 3-cent cake of Bazooka bubble gum. Unfortunately I lost the note telling me which exhibit was targeted at bubble gum chewers.

Earlier I speculated about why people came to the Milwaukee conference. Here, from the official newsletter of the conference are what reporters Anne Reid and Carol Carp found when they asked a typical cross-section of conference attendants, "What have you enjoyed most at the conference thus far?"

Huei-Ching Lin, graduate student from Taiwan attending Northern Illinois: "The concurrent session on critical awareness."

Sripen Supapidhayakul, doctoral student from Thailand attending Northern Illinois University: "Dr. Simon's opening presentation."

Huey Long, professor of adult and continuing education, Athens, Georgia: "People, fellowship."

I think Huey spoke for most of us.

DICK, JANE ARE YUPPIES BUT SPOT IS DEAD!

(JULY 1986)

Dick and Jane and Spot are making a comeback of sorts and it has done a lot for my morale. I feel a real kinship with Dick and Jane and Spot even though they came along far after I learned reading in the public schools of Columbia, Missouri. You see, Dick et al and I once worked for the same employer, the Scott, Foresman textbook publishing outfit. Dick et al made S, F wealthy and there used to be handsome oil portraits of all three at the company's campus-like headquarters outside Chicago. I used to visit the campus when this publication was owned by S, F.

The Dick and Jane stereotypes and the suburb they inhabited fit to a T the suburbs where my children used the book (although we were a nonconformist family—our dog was a golden retriever called Scooter) but suburbs like the one where Dick and Jane lived became objects of scorn to the educational intelligentsia and Scott, Foresman left Dick and Jane and Spot to shift for themselves.

This publication was acquired by S, F to gain exposure to adult educators while the firm was establishing a new Lifelong Learning Division. The S,F folks were great to work with, but business is business, and ACET's meager profits weren't justifying the amount of labor S,F put in on the publication, so ACET went the way of Dick and Jane. I guess that's not quite correct' ACET went to LERN out at Manhattan, Kansas.

I can still get a little respect by saying I used to print the Dick

and Jane books, but people my age get very touchy about being identified by what they used to do or be.

Well, hey! There's a new book out called "More Fun with Dick and Jane" and it's selling well. It's published by Penguin, not Scott, Foresman. Dick is a systems engineer and Jane is divorced. Spot is dead and so is Scooter. In the new book it isn't like our suburb which is getting shabby but is still pretty much Dick, Jane and Spot country. In the new book Dick and Jane's sister Sally, the publicity director for a winery, has her niece at a party for some friends, Winston, her black broker, Hisako from her EST group, and Daryl, her accountant. The niece says, "It's fun to party with Aunt Sally—but can we network now?"

That's the way the world turns and I'm told that these days quite a bit of networking goes on among the younger people in our suburb who occupy the houses of the early settlers who have moved to Florida. It's good to see Dick and Jane hanging on.

Birthday Notes

(August 1986)

In June I underwent (the verb is more accurate than "celebrated") my 75th birthday despite countless predictions that I would come to an ignominious and disgraceful end long before that event. ACET was kind enough to announce this event but the mail has been minimal.

When I was young, 75 years was old enough to be allowed to reminisce and give advice without fear of open rebellion. I used to sit on the lawn of the courthouse of Schuyler County, Missouri, and believe the accounts of valor in combat told by veterans of the Civil War. Try to get a kid today to tear himself away from Rambo long enough to listen to me brag about my adventures in the invasion of Normandy in World War II!

Today those of us between 65 and 80 are in the awkward years of old age, sort of a second adolescence. My mother-in-law is 90 and she just entered the ranks of the old or "frail" elderly. A year ago she was living by herself in a house in Kentucky, and cutting an acre of lawn with a riding mower. But the years caught up with her this spring and now she is in a nursing home, feeling guilty and frustrated over her loss of independence. Adult education is just beginning to offer help to parent and child in this situation, which is going to become commonplace as the American life span lengthens. That was one birthday thought.

The deaths of two persons I liked and admired marred my birthday week. One who died was in his 80s, a seminary graduate

who had served his God by temporal activities on behalf of the less fortunate in our society. His name was Nelson Cruikshank and he was president emeritus of the National Council of Senior Citizens, an organization of feisty seniors who mostly cling to the currently scorned values of the Roosevelt era. As some of you know, I have a desk and typewriter at the NCSC headquarters and perform some writing chores for the organization. Nelson Cruikshank served as counselor on aging to President Carter. He opposed the president privately and publicly when he thought him wrong, a condition that President Carter was big enough to accept. Nelson Cruikshank found his rewards in life from what he gave instead of from what he got.

The day before my birthday I went to the funeral of Frances Scott Fitzgerald Smith and to her burial in a churchyard outside Washington alongside the graves of her parents, F. Scott and Zelda Fitzgerald. In the '20s, studying American literature in Missouri, I admired the writing of F. Scott Fitzgerald and I suspect I was a little envious of the glamorous and somewhat dissolute life he and his wife Zelda led on Long Island and on the Riviera.

Scottie did what the children of the famous and glamorous rarely do—she created her own career and lived her own life. She worked for *The New Yorker* and *The New York Times* and wrote her own fiction. I got to know her when she worked on the Democratic Digest during a time when I was its managing editor. She was working there not for money or fame but because she believed in the programs and principles of the Democratic Party and its leader during those years, Adlai Stevenson.

I suppose all of this does not seem to have much to do with adult education. Somehow I wish it did. I wish adult education would use as teachers of history and social values some of the elderly who enjoyed life for what they gave rather than for what they got. All our lives are diminished when such people leave our earth. And soon who will be left to tell us what we did not ask them to say?

SHOW AND TELL AT THE CAEO

(OCTOBER 1986)

I usually wear three hats to the meetings of the Board of the Coalition of Adult Education Organizations. As a member of the board I represent the National Council of Senior Citizens. When Publisher Draves is not at the meeting, which is fairly often, I also represent the Learning Resources Network, my employer as national correspondent for *ACET*. Finally, I am there as a reporter for this publication.

The board of CAEO is really CAEO itself. The organization has no annual conference or convention, no individual members. The member organizations of CAEO include the two broadest adult education membership organizations, the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education and the National University Continuing Education Association. The AFL-CIO belongs and so do the two largest elementary and secondary teacher organizations, the American Federation of Teachers and the National Education Association. So does the American Council on Education, the college and university lobby that is the landlord at One Dupont Circle in Washington. Another member is the largest membership organization in the country, the American Association of Retired Persons, which has a zip code all to itself. You can see that CAEO serves a variety of masters, some of whom talk to one another only at the CAEO Board.

The board was feeling restive at its fall meeting, and introspective. Maybe it should have a purpose and a program and fancy

offices and an executive director. Board members are a little sensitive about having their meetings described as Show-and-Tell, and they wish CAEO got more publicity so when they put it on their vitae people wouldn't ask what it is. Well, the board talked a lot about this and the action it took was one that has become very popular with bodies with more responsibility—like the U.S. Congress, for example. It decided to talk some more about the matter at the next meeting.

I have poked fun at the CAEO Show-and-Tell in the past but in a society where people more and more huddle with their own and there is less general discourse, perhaps the Show-and-Tell of CAEO is a useful service, not just to provide me with copy for ACET, but to inform literacy specialists, for example, with news of what the continuing education people are up to, and to raise issues that the board could discuss and take a stand on if it chose to. I'm going to describe some of the presentations at the fall board meeting.

Do Business with Business

Bryan O'Reilly, a board member representing the College Board, explained the working of its Office of Adult Learning Services and its marketing seminars and a new program, "Doing Business with Business." The OALS has become skilled in telling educators how to sell courses to adults and it has added a new program in which the College Board moves in and (for about $6,000) helps an institution to sell its wares to local businesses.

It was Calvin Coolidge, I believe, who said, "The business of America is business." More and more, I find, the business of education is becoming business. It is disturbing that some educational institutions express a willingness to teach whatever it is that business wants. O'Reilly was asked if the College Board checked to see if the education it has helped arrange is proper and useful. O'Reilly patiently explained that quality control was not a College Board responsibility—the local accrediting association would take care of that.

There are adult education issues other than the size of appropriations for student loans, the size of federal grants and payments to educational institutions, the exemption from federal income tax of employee education benefits—all matters on which the

CAEO Board has taken a formal position. Marketing ethics and quality control of courses are also issues. The outcome of a continuing education course goes beyond the collection of the tuition money on to the end of the course and who learned what. CAEO should want to learn more about this aspect of continuing education.

David Stewart of the American Council for Education, a columnist for this publication. reported on a conference on the history of adult education held at Oxford, England.

Learners Join the Canadian Association

After lunch, the board heard from Ian Morrison, executive director of the Canadian Association for Adult Education. He had a leaflet that was a bit of a change from the College Board theme of "Gain a competitive advantage—for your institution and for yourself as a professional." In Canada they enroll learners as well as providers in their association. They have a recruitment leaflet with this copy on the cover:

"A person who has ceased learning ought not to be allowed to wander around loose in these dangerous times." Inside the leaflet the quote is credited to Jimmy Tompkins. I was the only board member who had to ask who Jimmy Tompkins is or was. As all you readers know, he was a figure in the Antigonish Movement of the 1920s and '30s which took its name from the Nova Scotia town of Antigonish. So he was talking about the dangerous times before life was complicated by nuclear weapons, computers and genetic engineering.

Look at Needs of Adult Learners

American adult education organizations serve practitioners and institutions as their first priority. If CAEO is looking for something to do it could think about ways to organize and serve adult learners.

Finally, CAEO met half a day at the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and saw a sampling of the excellent CPB/Anneberg TV courses that are becoming more and more available in cassette form as VCRs are becoming as ubiquitous as TV sets. This new system of delivery might reach more learners than

broadcasting or the postal service. Should CAEO do anything about it?

Well, after all this the board talked some more about what it should do and not do and then decided to talk some more about it at the next meeting. This CAEO meeting gave me things to think about as a senior citizen, as a journalist and as a CAEO board member. If the board wants to become an action organization I think the show-and-tells at this meeting provided them with some things about which to act. It also showed that show-and-tell can provide board members with things they can act upon in their capacities as citizens and as members of other organizations.

If you want to learn more, write: Office of Adult Learning Services, The College Board, 45 Columbus Avenue, New York, NY 10023-6917, or Institute of Lifetime Learning, American Association of Retired Persons, 1909 K Street NW, Washington, DC 20049, or Canadian Association for Adult Education, Corbett House, 29 Prince Arthur Ave., Toronto, Ontario M5R 1B2., Canada.

If you want to make suggestions, write me.

Tidying Up at Year's End

(December 1986)

This year has seen more attention given to the problem of illiteracy than in any other of the 15 years in which I have written about adult and continuing education. I have written about three times more in 1986 about illiteracy and literacy programs than I have in all my other years with ACET. I have also written this year about three times more about literacy than has appeared in ACET. My editor and publisher, who keeps his finger on the pulse of adult and continuing educators, has determined that most of you are bored with literacy and think that ACET has been paying too much attention to it. That is unfortunate.

Adult and continuing educators purport to be dedicated to providing learning opportunities for adults. Illiteracy is a severe learning disability. Reducing adult literacy would increase the market for adult and continuing education. In this era when Marketing shapes our actions and aspirations it would seem that Marketers would realize that reducing adult illiteracy would increase the market for adult and continuing education. This would cause adult and continuing educators to be interested in programs to reduce illiteracy, I had reasoned.

Now comes my last shot at tidying up things a bit before 1987 gets under way. I intend to use the space to put in a few items about illiteracy that got pushed aside for more exciting news. For one thing, you should know that there is a Task Force in Illiteracy organized by the Congressional Clearinghouse on the Future. I

know because I got up at dawn and attended, at some inconvenience, a breakfast it held in the Rayburn House Office Building. Here is some of what I wrote at the time:

Representatives of literacy organizations and Congressional staffers joined with media representatives in the briefing that proceeded at the comfortable pace of a Congressional hearing. Congressman Tom Tauke of Iowa presided, starting off with a few derogatory remarks about Minnesota and introducing Congressman Bill Goodling of Pennsylvania who introduced Mrs. Barbara Bush who received a standing ovation for getting up in time for an 8:30 breakfast.

Mrs. Bush introduced Harold McGraw, chairman of McGraw-Hill and founder of the Business Council for Effective Literacy. McGraw, who told some horror stories of the damage wrought by illiteracy was treated with the respect and affection that Congressmen and educators have for people with power and money.

Next came Garrett Murphy, New York State Director of Adult Education, working at his 24th year in adult basic education. He suggested we build on the system we now have. Garrett mentioned that he had fathered 15 children. He was treated with awe and admiration. Tauke, whose wife is expecting their first child, said his first reaction to Murphy's revelation was that he should seek advice from him; his second thought was that he should not. Garrett done good as a witness.

Marciene Mattleman, director of the Mayor's Commission on Illiteracy in Philadelphia, woke up anyone who had dozed off after pondering Murphy's parental exploits, by announcing that anyone who calls the commission gets enrolled right away and gets books to take home.

Ms. Mattleman recounted how she got some money from the Subaru Foundation. She showed them a "wait for green" sign at a stop light and suggested that being able to read it was good for the automobile business. She bragged a little about throwing out the first ball at a Phillies-Cubs game on Literacy Night and cited Yogi Berra in her concluding thanks "to everybody who made this meeting necessary."

Roger Semerad, assistant secretary of labor, not only came

out in favor of literacy, but volunteered that "we need people who have learned how to learn." He said we must invest more in human capital, a phrase that filled me with happiness. As many of you know, I abhor being called a "human resource," but "Human Capital," that's something else again! The current style in the Executive Branch is to scorn human and natural resources and to squander them, but capital gets the first class treatment every time! If you can't be a human capitalist, being human capital is close enough for poor folks like yours truly.

Finally, Peter Fannon, president of the National Association of Public Television stations, showed clips of public TV's participation in Operation PLUS.

The following members of the House and Senate and of the Taskforce on literacy also spoke: Jim Cooper, Alphone D'Amato, Albert Gore Jr., Jim Scheuer. All opposed illiteracy. To find out more about the Taskforce write Congressional Clearinghouse on the Future, H2-555, Congress of the United States, Washington DC 20515 or call 202-226-3434.

At breakfast the day I wrote this plea that adult educators support literacy programs (or at least read about them) I heard a doctor on the Today show saying that the time to start educating children was when they were still in the womb. He said that tests of children who were read Dr. Seuss stories while they were still fetuses showed them to be lots sharper than children who had loafed away their months of fetushood. Dr. Seuss is beneficial reading for all ages, but I hate to see the emphasis upon education shift farther away from the people most in need of educational help, to wit, the grown-ups who are making all the stupid mistakes in the worlds of government and business. There are parents whose children are enrolled in pre-nursery school classes who themselves would benefit greatly from being locked up with the Sunday *New York Times* for a couple of hours.

I think it is a healthy thing to read Dr. Seuss to fetuses that are being prepared to become investment bankers and corporation lawyers. But I believe in lifelong learning—womb to tomb! This year, adult and continuing educators, why not read "The Grinch Who Stole Christmas" to a Senior Citizen!

145 ***Season's Greetings.***

Heavy News from the Lite Front

(February 1987)

The 1950s single-family homes in my part of Montgomery County, Maryland, are starting to look a little shabby but just a couple of blocks away young couples with BMW's are moving into row houses that go for $350,000 a pop, so we aren't all out-of-date fogies. Even in the older section a large proportion of us arrange to have *The New York Times* hidden in the shrubbery along with *The Washington Post* and we do try to keep up with the trends. That is why our schools are going along with the sociological changes *The New York Times* has described as "The Lite Decade."

As part of this movement, we learned from *The Times*, there is a publisher who gives you "Ten Classics in Ten Minutes" on an audio cassette. The 700-plus pages of Moby Dick have been cut to one minute by eliminating "rambling soliloquies." No, I am not making this up and I have a clipping to prove that *The Times* revealed the following additional information about Light-Lite:

> There is light culture (books on tape), light shopping (buying clothes by video), light politics (candidates who run on image, not issues), light responsibility (the lowest voter participation rates of any democracy) and light music (Lite FM, where the heavy bass line has been removed so that the sound does not jar or stir listeners). And, of course, there is light food, with

which people can cut calories without changing their diets by using products like Jell-O Light, Cornitos Light Corn Chips, Heinz Lite Ketchup and Glace Lite, which its manufacturer, Sweet Victory, says "gives you all the rich, delicious pleasures of 300-calorie premium ice cream" at 100 calories a scoop.

Before the 16th century, the word "lite" meant "little, not much, few" in English and was pronounced differently from "light," according to Traugott Lawler, a medievalist at Yale University. But the word fell out of use.

Today's "lite" is used to indicate fewer calories or less salt, and essentially refers in weight in the same way that light is a reference to weight, Mr. Lawler said.

"Its spelling has been simplified in the 20th century by advertisers who use it to suggest ease and simplicity," he said. "It's a light spelling."

The effect of light foods on weight loss has been, well, light.

My county is going along with the Lite trend. Starting next fall our public schools are going to use the new five-digit mathematics and the 10-letter alphabet. We call it "Lite Literacy." The change to the five-digit mathematics has been relatively simple, mainly a matter of issuing new pocket calculators, rounded off to five-digit math. (Even in kindergarten nobody counts without a calculator.) The 10-letter alphabet is proving to be more troublesome and for the time being some problems of translation will be handled by putting the material on cassettes instead of attempting to print them with the 10-letter alphabet. Problem areas include the Bible and the U.S. Constitution, but essential documents like tax forms and TV program schedules seem to be coming through fine in their 10-letter form. Fans of the Wheel of Fortune TV show are circulating protest petitions.

Needless to say the entrepreneurs of adult learning have not been asleep in one of the 10 richest counties in the nation, and the public schools and a wide variety of institutions are offering adult

courses in five-digit mathematics and 10-letter English. Preliminary estimates are that these courses are going to be bigger than Kabuki and driveway auto maintenance, starting in the fall of 1987. One market-oriented adult educator described the streamlined mathematics as a "five-strike."

The Board of Education has devised a cartoon figure to promote the new courses on TV. His name is Bud Lite. He does remarkable computations using only the fingers and thumb of one hand. The Chamber of Commerce praised the switch to 10-letter English with this statement: "-his wis- d-cision pu-s us a- -h- cu— ing -dg- of knowl-dge."

Lite education is heavy stuff, the kind of trend you normally hear about from big-picture-guys like Ron Gross and Dave Stewart, I hope that you will vote for it in the Issue Election of '87 and I thank you for your support.

Adam and Easel

(March 1987)

Fundamentalists like myself who grew up in small town Missouri have pretty specific beliefs about the Creation, namely: The Lord created the earth in seven days and seven nights, including fixing up most of his mistakes and letting the paint dry. He worked very hard to make the garden of Eden look nice and he populated it with Adam and then with Eve. He was dusting his hands off and about to walk away when he had a couple of afterthoughts. One was that he wanted Adam and Eve to keep the place looking nice, water the plants, trim the hedges, things like that and he decided to put some fig leaves on Adam and Eve so they wouldn't be distracted from their gardening during the daylight hours. The other afterthought was kind of mischievous—He put a Snake in Eden. Things were going along all right but the Snake felt he wasn't getting much attention, so one day he suggested to Adam and Eve that things would go better (note that they were already perfect!) if they got together for some strategic planning, adopted long range goals and drew up a table of organization. Foolishly, Adam and Eve agreed and the Snake pulled out an easel and a big pad of paper and a china marker and they went to work. The rest, as they say, is history. It was the seminal case of fixing something that ain't broke.

Once Adam and Eve and the snake went to work with that easel and china marker, the world started going downhill. No more Edens. In fact, Eden itself went downhill. Outsiders started

to move into the neighborhood and pretty soon it was hardly safe to go down to the corner drugstore after dark. But I digress. Let's move on in history.

The Magna Carta was composed without an easel and group leaders. The United States Constitution was done with ink and quill pens on small sheets. God knows what would have come out if Madison had been standing up there with everyone wanting a break to go to the bathroom and Madison was saying, "Now that we've voted not to substitute 'singularly unique' for 'more perfect union' let's stop quibbling and get moving. We're still fussing about the Preamble, and some of us have stagecoaches to catch, so let's move on. Now as to the wise guy who says 'domestic tranquility' is an oxymoron, I haven't heard anything else suggested that sounds as good. Hell, you could use it as a campaign slogan, and 'blessings of liberty' has a wonderful ring...almost Biblical. You could do a TV spot with the sun rising on a little village and a couple of cute kids having breakfast in the kitchen..." And a lot of the founders are looking at their watches or reading their newspapers, and Madison is writing stuff on the easel pad with a quill china marker.

The Model T Ford just sort of happened and it ran pretty good. The Edsel was created by task forces that worked with easels and big pads of paper. There was a lot of interaction going on.

In 1984 Walter Mondale held strategic planning sessions with easels and consensus building to prepare his campaign against Ronald Reagan. President Reagan never saw an easel. He prepared for the campaign by watching old movies on TV until he dosed off. The first time he saw easels and china markers in his years in the White House is when the National Security Council guys came in with three easels and six pads to explain why they wanted to send arms to Iran.

Well, having all this history of strategic planning with pads and easels at my fingertips, you can see why I was a little nervous when the Board of the Coalition of Adult Education Offices set out to use, not one but THREE easels to undergo a day and a half of strategic planning.

The three-easels operation was something to watch, turning out three times as much strategy as you could with only one easel.

It was kind of like the haircuts you got back in the days when they used clippers and when a guy left one of those "Three Chairs—No Waiting!" barber shops, you could sure tell he's had his hair cut.

When we left the meeting rooms at the AFL-CIO headquarters after our three-easels—no waiting strategy sessions you could tell that we were older and wiser than when we started the day.

I enjoyed the sessions, even though I suspect adult educators ought to be thinking a little more about what adults need to learn during the dangerous years that are upon us rather than to scheme so much on how to market what they have left over from the '70s and the early 80s. Still, I found it pleasant to daydream about the Snake and the Garden of Eden. Eve is off in the corner, working out to the beat of a Jane Fonda videotape. Her fig leaves keep slipping and Adam has a hard time paying attention to what the Snake is writing on the easel. It reads: "Strategic Plan I. (a) facilitation of interaction. (b) behavior modification..." Adam's eyes keep wandering.

Why Isn't Illiteracy as Profitable to Adult Educators as Sin Is to Preachers?

(April 1987)

The big press conference to announce that PLUS would continue came on the first Daylight Saving Time Monday, enabling ACET's resident Washington newshound to get up in the dark and enjoy a wet snowfall as he waited for the commuter bus. He was sure glad he had gotten into journalism, for he was on his way for the umpteenth time in a decade and a half of working for ACET to an event where public figures were going to announce that many people were unable to read or write and that this evil condition was going to be met head-on by a campaign of AWARENESS and MOTIVATION. Adult educators would applaud as usual. For some curious reason many adult educators prefer to see illiteracy combatted by newspaper ads and TV spots rather than by hiring professional adult educators to teach people to read and write. In my early days as a police reporter I met quite a few people who could not read or write. They had discovered this condition without help from a public service advertising campaign.

Now we have TV spots and 800 telephone numbers to call for help. You tell the counselor that you have an enquiring mind that wants to know, but you can't make heads or tails out of anything in the *National Enquirer* except the pictures.

"Don't panic," the counselor says, "but you are suffering from illiteracy." And then the counselor gives the caller a telephone number and address to write down, a place where he or she can

get on a waiting list to learn to read and write.

The press conference about PLUS was well-organized; the orange juice was cold, the muffins warm and the coffee hot. There were a few reporters and some TV cameras there and a lot of adult educators and ABC and PLUS people. There was good deal of applause and only one question. Lark McCarthy of ABC wondered if Mrs. Bush (the Vice President's wife and a lady who is serious about doing away with illiteracy) would like to make a few remarks. Mrs. Bush, who had already made some remarks, appeared to be caught a bit off-balance by this tough, Sam Donaldson type question, but she managed a few more sentences and was greeted with heavy applause. There were no other questions.

I don't like to get up in the dark and stand around a bus stop with snow seeping down behind my coat collar, but I enjoy these mock press conferences. I see a lot of adult education professionals and sometimes they give me some news. Usually I get enough handouts so that I don't have to do much note-taking at the session or much writing after it.

But there is one thing always missing and that is for an adult educator who knows his facts to get up and state that awareness spots on TV and pleas for volunteers are all commendable activities, but that the only way we are going to get rid of illiteracy is to hire enough paid, trained, full-time teachers to provide immediate instruction to everyone who needs it.

I hope this doesn't sound bitter, because, just as I did during the Vietnam war, in the war on illiteracy I see light at the end of the tunnel.

A final note. Since illiteracy is as unquenchable and universal as sin, why can't teachers get as rich from fighting illiteracy as those TV preachers get from fighting sin? Maybe we will have a clue when we find out why Dallas draws more viewers than those GED programs on channel 98 at 5:30 a.m., Saturday.

JOHN OHLIGER

(JULY 1987)

John Ohliger has sent me a photocopy of marked sections of the first edition of *The American Journal of Distance Education* in which editor Michael G. Moore, under the gentle headline "Misunderstandings," responds to my cavalier comments about distance education. I am not sure we are as far apart as it may appear to those who see me, bleeding and battered, trying to get to my feet while Dr. Moore strides jauntily away, dusting his hands and looking for the next wise guy. (see box.)

I think the difference between me and Dr. Moore starts because he tends to think of TV learning as the delivery over the airwaves of a planned course in an academic program. I start out with the presumption that what most of us learn in the classroom is (if we are lucky) how to learn on our own when we graduate. I hold that most of us not in the academic professions learn far, far more from nonacademic sources than from academic ones.

Most of us get much more of this kind of "learning" from TV than from all other sources, and this TV "learning," which uses more of our senses (including our sense of smell) than other media, has a very powerful effect. The less sophisticated (or educated if you please) the viewer, the greater the impact.

We have gone from the innocent Make-Believe Ballroom of radio to the Make-Believe Presidency of TV, which is far from innocent.

TV advertising has "progressed" from suggesting we buy a Chevrolet because it is a soundly built machine at a reasonable price to telling us it is the heartbeat of America.

In politics, TV has taught us to cast our votes on the basis of the make-believe commercials we see during the campaign instead of on the flesh-and-blood candidate himself.

TV has conditioned us to get our pleasures from watching instead of the doing.

It has made us lazy.

It has made us lonely.

It has blighted our sense of community.

The changes that TV has brought about in the American lifestyle is the result of generic distant learning whether we call it that or not.

It is appropriate for me to state at this point that I hold the primary purpose of adult education in this nation should be to assist us in governing ourselves. Adult educators talk of "empowerment" of the people when a little literacy is taught to the citizens of a third world nation, but talk precious little of what kind of learning is required for the "empowerment" of the American electorate.

I propose that it is irresponsible for adult educators to avoid attempting to deal with the problems created by television. Dr. Moore wants educators to "become users, not opposers, of modern communications" and to avoid "single medium fixations." Sure, but what I am writing now is no better or no worse because I am composing on a typewriter instead of a word processor. The product is more important than the process.

I fear that I am writing past Dr. Moore just as he was writing past me in his editorial comments. I hope that someone will invite Dr. Moore and myself to share a platform and talk about this face-to-face, but I am not so committed to my out-of-date habits that I would spurn a distance learning colloquy.

Misunderstandings

As I began to write this editorial, I was shown the announcement of our new publication in a widely-read adult education newsletter. The announcement was accompanied by a commen-

tary which I would like to refer to briefly as illustrative of the kind of misunderstandings about distance that are not uncommon in the field of educating adults, and which this journal should help overcome. The commentator wrote that fifteen years ago he was told that "old-fashioned face-to-face learning was passe, and the wave of the future was the airwaves, which would deliver distance education on the TV screen." Since then, he continued, "the TV screen has delivered very little education, but—the American people have learned more bad habits and things that aren't so (sic) from watching TV in the ensuing years than has been accomplished in all history by the printed word." (*Adult and Continuing Education Today*, XVII, No. 4.) Now, setting aside the extravagance of the assertion that TV has been so much more harmful than print, and print quite so innocent, and setting aside the unlikelihood of his use of the term distance education before its public introduction at the 1972 Conference of the International Council for Correspondence Education, this commentator makes a good point. Who would disagree that television in America has had a checkered history in education or that general broadcasting is a pathetic and inaccurate (one hopes) reflection of American culture, values, and accomplishments.

Revisiting a Success Story in Adult Education

(October 1987)

Back in the late '70s I traveled around the country talking with people whose lives had changed for the better because of adult basic education. I wrote about them in a booklet called Success Stories of Adult Learning in America. The project was sponsored by the National Advisory Council on Adult Education.

I had wanted to go back and see how these people were getting along, so, nearly a decade later when I finished a holiday in New Orleans I headed northwest for Baton Rouge instead of northeast for Bethesda, Maryland. Baton Rouge is where I met Mary Meno almost a decade ago and visited her family and went with her into Cajun bayou country. There I met a quiet white man named Gordy Shirley who helped put a black child mother on the path to literacy long before public schools in Louisiana were integrated and long before there was a federal adult education law.

One of the first things Mrs. Meno told me when I entered her comfortable office in the skyscraper that Gordy Shirley, that mentor of long ago, had died a few months ago. Marie Meno is (and was when I interviewed her in 1978) a supervisor of adult education in the Louisiana Department of Education. What I wanted to find out was how Mrs. Meno and her husband, Joseph, and their children were making out. Were they benefitting from the struggle Marie and Joseph underwent to get their (GEDs; was it worth the effort to them and was it worth to society what it cost the taxpayer?

What does the Meno experience tell us about the worth of adult basic education programs? What does it tell us about the worth of the GED graduation certificate?

Here is the box score on the Meno family.

Marie Meno has earned a Master's degree and has 30 hours toward a Doctorate. Joseph has studied a good deal since he got his GED, mostly at occupational skills. He went to work for Gulf Utilities and helped cook and look after the children while Marie was getting her Bachelor's degree from McNeese State at Lake Charles, where she commuted from their home in Jennings. Joseph Meno is retired from his Gulf Utilities job after a heart attack. He thought nothing of borrowing money at 25 percent interest to get Marie through McNeese. When I had dinner with the family in 1978, long before househusbandship was in vogue, it was Joseph Meno who prepared the three-star gumbo we ate. I like Joseph Meno. He played a key role in his wife's success. And I believe he is comfortable with himself, an outcome many of seek but few of us achieve. I wanted Lucy to meet Joseph Meno, but we were on a tight schedule so I settled for a telephone visit.

And what about the Meno's children—their own and the ones they adopted? The adopted ones, the ones they raised while they were getting their GED certificates, have high school diplomas and are working in California where their natural father lives. He is Joseph's brother. The children were adopted when their mother died and their father went west in search of work.

Here is the account on their own children.

Dianne is married and lives in Lake Charles, She has a B.A. from McNeese State and works for the National Education Association and the Louisiana Education Association as field director of a joint personnel project.

Rita is also married and works for the U.S. Department of Agriculture in Louisiana and Arkansas. She has a B.S. from Southern University.

Joe Ann opted for a vocational education and is now married and working at a school in Garden Grove, California.

Wayne has a B.S. from Southern University and is teaching chemistry and physics at the magnet high school in Baton Rouge.

Velta, the youngest, is married and living in Jennings, where her mother started out. Like her mother, she is taking some courses at McNeese State.

So there, in brief outline, is what an adult basic education program did in two generations. It produced self-fulfillment and responsible, self-supporting citizens.

An administration looking for ways to strengthen family life could do worse than to take a second look at adult education. And a first look at the Meno family.

Are We Thinking for Ourselves—If Not, Who Is?

PART III

1988 - 1991

SAM APPEARS ON THE DONAHUE TV SHOW

(JUNE 1988)

Manhattan's East Side is the world's number one gathering spot for offensively huge limousines with ominous smoked glass windows that hide heaven-knows-what. Naturally I've always wanted to ride in such a vehicle, and that is what I did a few days ago in—where else?—Manhattan's East Side. The Donahue TV Show folks provided this luxurious transportation to take me from the Drake Hotel on Park Avenue to the studios in Rockefeller Plaza, where the show originates.

I was in New York to play a bit part on a program featuring Dr. Sidney Wolfe, director of the Public Citizen Health Research Group, a Ralph Nader-affiliated medical consumer organization. Dr. Wolfe and the agency have just published a book, *Worst Pills, Best Pills.* The book is designed to protect consumers from using ineffective or useless medications or from side effects that may be worse than the conditions they are supposed to remedy.

Dr. Wolfe and Donahue wanted senior citizens, who are heavy user of prescription drugs, to appear on the show. I was recommended to him by several people who had heard me testify before Congressional committees about the high cost of the heart, lung, and blood pressure medications that keep me alive.

Donahue and Dr. Wolfe are skilled veterans for educating adults, and it was a pleasure to watch them work. Before we left Washington, dr. Wolfe went over the list of medications that I was taking and noted that one, a drug for gastric problems, had

strong side effects. He asked me if I had experienced any episodes of tremors or momentary loss of balance. I had. Dr. Wolfe suggested I talk with the doctor who had prescribed the drug. I did so. She suggested I discontinue the medication, and the side effects have eased. Dr. Wolfe brought this out in the broadcast.

Donahue spent a good amount of time chatting with the audience and making them comfortable before the show went on the air. He also took time to get acquainted with his four drug popping senior citizens. That helped avoid stage fright.

Just as a good class ends with students having more questions than there is time to answer, so ended the broadcast. During the hour, I noticed that Donahue had some of the mannerisms and tactics of a political science professor who taught me in college. The professor turned his classroom into a theater by working like a professional entertainer to keep his students involved. Did that professor get results? An English major, I spent 18 years of the prime of my life in the political sciences on the staff of the Democratic National Committee.

How well did Donahue and Dr. Wolfe put across the lesson that medicines are a two-edged sword and that the consumer must look out for himself and not assume there are no problems of conflict or side effects? I have no national returns, but two well-educated, sophisticated friends, who tuned in to obtain ammunition for insulting comments about my performance, both sent $10 to get the *Worst Pills, Best Pills* book.

The book addresses a problem that will help adult education professionals organize much-needed courses on medication conflicts and side effects.

The book is important to all ages, but particularly so for the elderly who tend to require more medication. Courses for the aged probably will attract middle-aged children of the elderly. The Donahue Show audience was about half elderly and half children of the elderly. To get the book, send $10 to "Pills," 2000 P Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20036.2

What Every Course Marketer Should Know About Old Folks

(November 1988)

Our sister publication, Course Trends, recently ran this provocative headline, "What Do You Call Older Adults?"

The purpose was no woolly-headed exercise in finding out what might make old folks feel good. The hunt was for what appellation would touch the pocketbook nerve and cause Old Codgers and Old Codgerettes, the term of affection and respect we elderly males use in referring to our spouses, to shell out some of our Social Security money for noncredit courses. In adult education, as in many other fields, Old Age is a marketing problem.

The article suggests that today's baby boom generation (sometimes called yuppies) will be too elegant to put up with being called "senior citizens, golden agers or even older adults."

How About 'Surplus American?'

I started to fret about this problem some years ago when I began working with the National Council of Senior Citizens. Senior Citizen is a less cutesy phrase than golden ager. Older American is not much help because virtually every American is older than some other American.

Surplus American has been suggested by those who think the federal government could save a lot of money by doing away with Social Security and Medicare. Such a step would undoubtedly save money and reduce the number of surplus Americans but the

idea has never really caught on with members of my generation.

The biggest membership organization in the United States is the American Association of Retired Persons. It is a catchy name all right, but millions of its members have not yet retired. One of its most popular stands among its members, in fact, is opposition to the employment penalty in Social Security and to mandatory retirement.

Proud to be Called A Senior Citizen

I won't trouble to tell you all of the catchy names and acronyms I considered before I came back to—guess what?—senior citizen. Some of us are retired from the work place and some of us are not, but almost none of us has retired from citizenship. We take part in community life and politics. We are senior—I'm certain that I am the oldest resident on our block.

Seniority is not a bad thing for those who have it. It starts out in high school and goes on through college and into your employment. I has an implication, not always accurate, that the senior person has learned from experience.

And so I wound up deciding that the National Council of Senior Citizens was appropriately named and that I should be proud, not embarrassed, to be called a senior citizen.

Grump Is A Good Word

If you marketers out there believe that you have to inflict an acronym on us, please forget the OPAL (Older People with Active Lifestyles) suggested in the *Course Trends* article. You might consider the acronym used by me and some of my elderly associates It is GRUMP. As I am sure most of you realized instantly, it stands for Grown-Up Mature Person.

I have been a senior citizen for 12 years, I am pretty much self-taught but if they had graded classes and compulsory attendance for oldsters like they do for youngsters, I would be—what else?—a high school senior.

We do not have to worry about SAT tests so there's no cram course marketing that will work on us seniors. Not that there may not be this opportunity in the future. There have been serious proposals that the vote be denied to anyone aged 65 or older.

There have been equally serious suggestions that everyone 65 should be forced to pass a citizen competency test before being allowed to vote. A good many fans of mandatory continuing education will find, I suspect, a good deal of merit in this proposal.

In conclusion, I ask marketers and designers of courses for senior citizens to bear this in mind: In my 12 years of seniorship I have found there are two things almost all of us share, regardless of whether we are financially comfortable or are scratching to pay the bills. These are lack of purpose and loneliness. And don't forget we are GRUMPs. Wants assessment, not the educator's usual needs assessment, is the best guide to getting our attention.

The Little Tree with the Twisted Trunk

(January 1989)

It was getting late on Christmas Eve. It was dark and raw and drizzly and the nursery people from West Virginia were taking down their multi-colored lights and putting them in their trunk. They would look at the single, lonely tree and at their watches and shake their heads impatiently.

The little tree was scared. It had been in the lot all week before Christmas and the bigger trees had made fun of it because it was small and its trunk was bent and twisted. Some of the bigger trees called it "runt" and smirked as ladies in fur coats drove up in big cars and left with the bigger trees.

Right in front of the tree with the twisted trunk one woman said so that all the other customers could hear, "I don't want a dwarf like this. I need a big tree that will look good in the two-story foyer of our new house." And another one said, "My husband is going to be in the Bush Cabinet and we need a tree that symbolizes our belief in family values." Even sensitive people with "I brake for Squirrels" and "Save the Whales" bumper strips on their Volvos made unflattering remarks about the little tree with the twisted trunk. Sometimes people who are very sensitive about animals and other minority ethnic groups will blurt things out in front of plants like the plants didn't have any feelings at all.

But late Friday a little old lady with white hair drove up in a funny little red car and looked around the lot. Her eyes lighted up when she saw the little tree. "Just the size I want," she said with

a smile. "I'll put it on the cabinet next to the downstairs love seat and my children won't be able to make any smart-aleck remarks about whether to cut a hole in the floor or in the ceiling to make room for the tree."

A Tear of Pitch

She smiled at the tree and made a cash deposit and said she would come back the next afternoon to pick up the tree. The proprietors of the tree lot and all of the remaining trees snickered after she left and the little tree did not know whether to laugh or cry.

It was dark Christmas Eve and the lights had all been packed in the truck and there was nothing left except some scraps of holly and mistletoe and the little tree, when almost like a Yuletide miracle, the little old white-haired lady drove up in the red car and gave the man some money and put the little tree into the red car. At home, she was starting to put it into a tree holder when the phone rang and the little old lady answered it and rushed off to the train station to pick up her son from New York. He was the one who had worked at the Tyson's Corner Shopping Mall as a professional Santa Claus when he was too young to have a driver's license and he was the Executive Tree Trimmer in the family.

While the little old white-haired lady was gone, a woman in her thirties came into the room and looked at the little tree with the twisted trunk. "Mother must have picked out the tree again this year," she said. A tiny tear of pitch trickled down the trunk of the tiny tree. The blond-haired woman left and pretty soon the white-haired old lady returned with a younger man all loaded down with bundles.

"How do you like the tree?" the old lady asked. "It's different, sort of distinctive," the younger man replied kindly.

He took a saw and cut an inch off the bottom of the trunk. To a Christmas tree this is just like a person getting a manicure and the tree had a feeling of security and comfort for the first time in a week.

A Happy Ending

Later that night, the man and the little old lady searched through boxes and boxes of ornaments and lights they brought

down from the attic and decorated the tree. The next day other members of the family of the white-haired old lady came to visit and you could tell they admired the tree very much because they would say things like, "This tree sure looks different," and "Lucy strikes again," and this made the little tree with the twisted trunk feel very proud and happy.

The little tree was happy all during the holidays. It was in a county with an anti-pollution ordinance. It used to be that the people in their neighborhood got kind of pagan on the Twelfth Night and took their trees to the practice fairway of the golf club and lighted them in a big bonfire and drank toasts to them as they watched the funeral pyre.

But that was before the anti-pollution law. Now, just before the Twelfth Night, they stacked them up at the nearest elementary school and men came with a truck and hauled them off to a Christmas Tree Burial Ground. The little old white-haired lady had failed to remove all of the nice ornaments when she repacked them. The other trees could see that these were classy ornaments and that the tree came from a nice home so they treated it politely and didn't make funny remarks like the trees in the lot had done. The little tree with the twisted trunk felt happy and proud. God will that we all are as happy on our return to the soil from which we came.

National Center of Adult Learning Established

(February 1989)

Memo: a publication of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, reports that Empire State College has discovered that many adults have sneaked onto campuses recently and, with the State University of New York, has established a National Center of Adult Learning.

The center is dedicated "to improving theory, research and practice in adult learning."

Memo says: "The center is taking a distinctive approach to researching adult education issues," said Timothy Lehmann, assistant vice president for research and evaluation at Empire State. He explained that the new center's practitioner-centered approach to research, in contrast to traditional research, is developed around practical problems and the results are disseminated back to users and practitioners, who can incorporate the findings into their teaching programs.

"The center will study such things as how adults learn by connecting the learning process to their work and other life experiences, how should prior learning be assessed and should the curriculum be structured or open-ended," he added.

For more details, call 518/587-2100.

TIME MARCHES ON!

(FEBRUARY 1989)

In 1987 the magazine of a professional journalists' society to which I have belonged since the early thirties ran an article by Ray Cave, once the managing editor of *Time*, at that time corporate editor of *Time, Inc.*

It argued these three propositions in a way that so impressed me that I saved them and photocopied them for some old newspaper friends. They were as follows:

"One, there is much less difference between what sells and good journalism than one might think."

"Two, it is not what an editor puts on the pages of a publication that matters most. It is what comes off those pages into the minds of the readers."

"And three, it is an editor's duty to give readers what they ought to read, not what they want to read. The most difficult task is to make them want to read what they ought to read."

That is pretty much what I tried to do as editor of two disparate publications, *The Democratic Digest* and *Adult and Continuing Education Today*. I did not succeed but I did not expect to because the better publications always have unattainable goals.

I have not been reading *Time* regularly, but the other day I picked up a copy and thought it was more like *People* than it used to be.

A few days later I read the following in the *New York Times:*

"Richard B. Stolley, the founding editor of People magazine,

will assume the job of editorial director of the 22 magazines at Time, Inc. next month, succeeding Ray Cave, who was forced out of the position last month, the company announced."

Well, *Time* Marches On, as the saying goes, and some day all periodicals will be like the magazines in the dentist's waiting room.

The call for papers and request for meetings is out of the 1989 American Association for Adult and Continuing Education Conference October 1-7 at Atlantic City.

Program proposals and abstracts are due by February 28. You can get the forms from AAACE at 1112 16th St. NW #420, Washington, DC 20036, 202/463-6333.

The emblem for the conference is two Aces of hearts and the slogan, appropriate, I suppose, for the meeting site of Atlantic City is "Adult Education: The Chance of a Lifetime."

Once again I am puzzled by a conference slogan or subtitle. "The" is singular. Does adult education offer us only one chance? How do we know as we look at the enticing catalogs of credit and noncredit purveyors of learning which course is THE chance of our lifetime? With only one chance, should I choose macrame or ballroom dancing? Do all of those people who market courses really want to limit adults to one chance in a lifetime? Does the merry-go-round of education stop only once?

All my life I have assumed that adults needed to learn and learn and learn, but a recent event has undermined that belief. The paperback version of a best-selling book, *All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten* by Robert Fulghum, has been sold for $2.1 million. Well, as a professional golfer recently remarked about a $400,000 purse, "some people have to work two or three years to get that kind of money."

If I sound a little bitter about all this, it's because there were no public kindergartens in Columbia, MO. when I was young. You started out cold in the first grade. No buses either; you walked to school.

If I had gone to kindergarten Mr. Fulghum says I would have learned to: "Share everything. Play fair. Don't hit people. Put things back where you found them. Clean up your own mess. Don't take things that aren't yours..."

Absent kindergarten, I was fortunate enough to learn some of those things at Army boot camp. I also learned, "Don't do like I do; do like I say. Shut up. Walk in step. Don't ask questions. Shine your shoes. Be obsequious."

Had I been educated at kindergarten as well as Army boot camp I probably would have led a more rewarding life. There is still one hope. If adult education means taking a class conducted by a certificated adult educator, I still have "The Chance of A Lifetime."

Who's Going To Lead Whom?

(March 1989)

"New Directions: Continuing Education and The University of The 21st Century" is the theme of the 74th national conference of the National University Continuing Education Association in Salt Lake City this April. NUCEA has published an attractive and impressive advance program. The explanation of the theme commences with these words:

"As America enters the 21st century, significant changes in societal demographics, the economy, and modern science and technology will combine to suggest a new concept of the higher education institution. How well colleges and universities respond to this future will depend in large part upon the leadership of the continuing higher education professionals who will face the challenges that lie ahead."

I wonder whether this is a statement of fact, an accurate prophecy or a bit or wishful thinking. I am a graduate of a respected research university and a state university with a world-renowned school of journalism. In more than 50 years of alumni pitches the only activity at either institution that I cannot recall being mentioned is continuing education.

A Step Ahead?

A few alumni of one institution who live in the Washington area were rounded up for luncheon at the Metropolitan Club with the chancellor a few years ago. It was apparently assumed that

alumni who could survive the high prices in the nation's capitol would have a few spare dollars for alma mater.

The chancellor cited as a sign of increased stature that his (our?) university no longer would award a business degree to night school students! At conventions I have heard more than a few tales of rough milking of the continuing education cash cow by university administrators.

I truly wish that our colleges and universities were clamoring for their continuing education staffs to lead them into the next century, but I am no more persuaded that such is the case than I am persuaded that tenured professors and the occupants of endowed chairs are begging for the chance to teach a night class. I would, of course, enjoy being wrong about this!

Playpen For Adult Educators

A couple of things I suspect to be true may be among reasons the great boom in adult education that I have expected for nearly two decades has not occurred.

One is that most of us would rather go to dramatic seminars about change than to do things much differently tomorrow than we did them yesterday. The other is that most of us tend to be more loyal to the institution that employs us than to our profession or trade.

This is understandable to me because I am guilty on both counts. I cling to my manual typewriter and fight off change to electronic composition. I give more allegiance to the LERN folks out in Kansas who send me checks twice a month than to the small unorganized band of journalists who write about adult learning.

Adult Education A Distraction?

The bulk of adult education is delivered by public school systems and by colleges and universities. I believe that most adult educators pledge their allegiance to these bodies rather than to the profession of educating adults.

The people who run public school systems regard adult education as a distraction from their main mission of pounding some knowledge into the young and restless. The people who run the colleges and universities consider continuing education a

rather shabby way of making some money so that the institution can go on with its main mission, which is to retain the operating procedures that were in effect when your father matriculated.

The public schools have been under reform fire for several years now with such suggestions as the issuing of vouchers which parents could cash in at a convenient public school parochial school or 7-11 store. Still, aside from the addition of the metal detectors, public schools haven't changed much. Students are still going to the high school in St. Louis that sent me forth in 1928, although the teachers are not the same.

About the time I was departing Soldan High School, H.L. Mencken was suggesting that the universities be reformed by burning the buildings and hanging the professors. My alma maters responded to this suggestion by enlarging the field houses and raising tuition.

Book Is A Polemic

What stirred up my musings about the orphan status of adult and continuing education was the publication of a book called *Profscam. Professors and the Demise of Higher Education*, written by Charles J. Sykes and published by Regnery Gateway of Washington. It is what book reviewers like to call a polemic.

With obvious relish New York Times reviewer Roger Kimball wrote:

"Drawing on testimony from universities across the country, Mr. Sykes samples everything from the hermetic and overtly politicized cant pouring out of our humanities departments to the pseudoscientific humbug populating those wonderfully oxymoronic academic inventions, the social 'sciences.' What can be done to improve things? Mr. Sykes is as straightforward in his prescriptions of reform as he is in setting forth his indictment; abolish tenure, require professors to teach, restore the traditional curriculum and relieve the unwarranted pressure on young academics to publish."

Cant and Humbug

Well, very few of us, given the choice between tenured dispensation of cant and humbug or sweaty work teaching old-

fashioned academic courses without tenure, would hesitate to make the prudent decision—cant and humbug.

Which is a bit of a detour on my way to suggesting that maybe adult and continuing educators need to consider whether they would not be better off if new institutions were created especially for the delivery of education to adults.

Maybe adult education should be taken out of places where its practitioners are stepchildren at best and given a playpen all its own. The noncredit, nonaccredited operations in the major cities with their imaginative courses and lively catalogues seem to be finding a growing market for their wares.

Imagine an Adult Learning Institute in every state, housed in an impressive Gothic building with ivy on the walls and a grassy lawn. It would be run by adult educators and they and their adult students could enter through the front door.

All of the students would have their tuition financed with generous loans from Uncle Sam and all of the faculty would have tenure. The faculty would, however, be required to teach students. Even so, it would be an improvement over present circumstances, wouldn't it?

Service Bill Gets Educator's Attention

(June 1989)

Rep. Pat Williams (D., Mont.) chairman of the House Postsecondary Education Subcommittee, told a Congressional hearing that most members opposed phasing out present student aid programs and requiring students to perform public services in return for financial help.

He said there was little chance that the proposal of Senator Sam Nunn (D., GA) and Rep. Dave McCurdy (D., OK) would get by his subcommittee.

The education lobby was represented by a tidy racial and geographical mix, headed by ACE witness Edward J. Bloustein, president of Rutgers. Bloustein represented 10 other higher ed groups.

Bloustein said most campuses are already encouraging students to serve in programs and are trying more to serve their communities. He suggested a limited test of the service idea.

Meantime, two Republicans, Senator John McCain of Arizona and Rep. John E. Porter of Illinois, have introduced a bill that would mandate service by all young people, regardless of whether they seek federal college financial aid or not.

As this issue went to press no legislation had been introduced requiring mandatory public service by the middle-aged or as a quid-pro-quo for Social Security benefits. It is early in the session, one observer noted.

The Decline and Fall of the Information Society

(June 1989)

Notes: Introduction to History 101

Improbable as it may seem today, the site of this campus was once part of an independent nation that had its own government and was developed enough economically to have been a major player in a world war as recently as the middle of the twentieth century.

Although existing relics such as the remains at Fenway Park indicate the inhabitants were outdoor people, there is convincing evidence that the citizens enjoyed shelters from the heat or cold, had means to travel from one place to another and the skills to store and transmit information.

Throughout this semester we will examine the existing evidence about this once proud state in an effort to understand what transpired during its decline and fall, which has been so dramatically documented by our department head, Dr. Gibbon.

Computer Worshipers

Let me mention a few of the ways these people differed from today's norm. They were computer worshipers and they spent a great deal of their time putting things into a computer or taking them out. (Computers were bulky and complicated objects which performed many of the things we do today with our minds.)

There were periods when all activity stopped and the citizenry moaned to one another, "The computer is down." Many historians argue that had the computers not been down, the nation might have survived the disaster that struck on February 29, 1997.

How many of you have been to the little museum town of Manhattan on the Kansas prairie and seen the people, animals, buildings and computers frozen in time just as they were when the disaster of 1997 struck?

But dramatic as that disaster of 1997 was, most historians hold that the trouble came from the decision to stop manufacturing products and growing food and become instead an information society.

It became a rage, a fad, a frenzy. Great corporations stopped making automobiles, refrigerators, everything. State and local governments stopped paving streets and repairing sewers. No one constructed buildings any more. Great universities stopped teaching subjects to their student so that everyone, faculty and students alike, could concentrate on creating and storing information. Some universities had so much information that they had to build computers the size of the Empire State Building to store it.

By 1991 all human activities had been digitalized except in Texas, where the people occupied themselves by watching Lonesome Dove reruns on black-and-white TV sets. There is considerable debate over whether the substitution of digitalization for the English language in 1994 was premature and we shall address that issue in the second semester.

Quiet Prevailed

When the country stopped making things it also stopped growing food and all this made things a lot tidier and quieter than they had been. People could just sit in front of their computers and fax machines and exchange information and nobody had to travel or leave the house. It was very quiet without the airplanes and trucks.

An event occurred in 1995 that probably deserved more attention than it received at the time. The president and governor of Alaska sat there with their computers hooked up and neither

one of them could think of anything to transmit to the other. Folks just said, "Well, that's Old Poppy (as they called their beloved but failing president) for you," and went on with their lack of business.

Perhaps you are wondering about the education system in this society. Below the university level, education was mainly conducted for the pleasure and entertainment of the youngsters, who were forced to attend these grammar schools and high schools, as they were called, until they were 16 years old.

These schools were financed by public taxes and were conducted by a kind of priesthood of administrators and teachers. These clerics of eduction were trained at special institutions that taught only how to teach, or pedagogy. The seminarians were not distracted by studying things like history, mathematics or foreign languages like English or French.

Thus, when they completed their indoctrination they could teach one subject as well as another subject.

These votaries belonged to secret societies called NEA and AFT. They were powerful forces in a society that had discovered you didn't need an education to create information.

Well, whatever this happy nation needed was grown or manufactured elsewhere in return for information. America had it all—leisure, luxury, an informed electorate (The University of Alaska, for example, once a month shipped five pounds of computerized information to every man, woman and child in the state) and no outdoor work or heavy lifting.

We Could Use Some Corn and Asparagus

How things began to unravel is a subject of disagreement among historians. The popular version is that one day a fellow in Last rock, Arizona, noticed his Toyota was getting shabby and called the local dealer. "How many bales of information are you getting for a Corolla these days?" he asked.

There was a long silence and then the dealer told him, "We got a dealers' bulletin today. Tokyo says it has all the information it needs and then some, but it could use some refrigerators, airplanes and avocados."

Well, they didn't produce any of those things in Last rock,

Arizona, so the guy called the BMW dealer. Got the same answer. Called the Hyundai dealer. He said Korea was short of corn and fresh asparagus, didn't need any information. The guy even went to a Yugo dealer and got turned down.

Some of you may be wondering what role adult and continuing education played in American civilization, as it has come to be called, and we will talk about that on Wednesday. Try to be in your seats and quieted down so that we can start promptly at five after the hour.

Smoking Ban and Adult Education

The American University in Washington, D.C., has sent education writers a booklet describing the smoking rules it will put into effect this fall.

It's a dramatic policy that seems to make most of the campus off-limits to smokers. The university says that when the rights of smokers and nonsmokers conflict, the rights of the nonsmokers are to prevail.

I haven't seen much about smoking policies at sites where adult learning is purveyed, but I suspect we're going to read a good deal about it in the future. If you wish to obtain a copy of the booklet, write: AU Office of Media Relations, 4400 Massachusetts Ave., N.W. Washington, D.C. 20016-8124.

PROPRIETARY SCHOOLS UNDER FIRE

(JULY 1989)

The Republican Administration of President Bush is cracking down on proprietary trade schools. Trade school representatives say this is unfair, that Bush is picking on schools which provide a second chance to high school dropouts.

Rep. Marge Roukema (R., NJ) Thinks many schools are "preying on students, luring them with false advertising, not revealing qualifications for loans—and then they take the money and run—literally. These students, many of whom are minorities, are the victims in real respects, because they are ultimately responsible for the loans without an education," she said.

Administration officials say that of the nearly $2 billion in default loans, about half were accumulated by students at business and beauty schools.

The administration would have proprietary schools provide information on course completion and job placement.

One school, whose owner resists criticism, charges $3700 a year for a cosmetology course that has an 89.5% loan default rate.

One Washington observer noted that money that goes for these failed students is money that is not available for qualified students to attend reputable and responsible institutions.

Enjoy the Ideas of March

(November 1989)

If you haven't been in Washington in March you will not believe how lovely it is with a soggy wind blowing over dark gray slush except for the week of March 18-24, National Adult and Continuing Education Week. This week will be culminated when outstanding adult learners receive awards at the annual breakfast on Capitol Hill.

From March 11 to 14th you can attend the 1990 Leadership and Legislative Seminar.

For additional information and guaranteed reliable weather forecast contact: American Association for Adult and Continuing Education, 1112 17th St., N.W. Suite 420, Washington, DC 20036.

IT'S TIME WE ALL GOT ORGANIZED

(NOVEMBER 1989)

My colleague, Dave Stewart, has written a compelling account of the deficiencies of the adult education community and an eloquent plea for more involvement in professional organizations, particularly the enveloping one, the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education (AAACE).

On occasion I have expressed some concerns about the effectiveness of adult educators in winning legislative support and public understanding. I have been told in a polite way that I have become a nag, a scold and a bit of a bore on the subject. The point has also been made that I am an outsider, a journalist, not an educator. Perhaps I have been a lazy journalist or a clumsy one because I have not had great success in getting you to see yourselves as others see you, or don't see you.

Well, Dave Stewart is not an outsider. He is the ultimate insider, an important figure at One Dupont Circle, the home of the higher education establishment, the locus of the effective lobby that has persuaded the public and Congress that every institution of higher education is entitled to be supported by government guaranteed loans to its students. This lobby has also persuaded Congress that it is none of its or the public's business what those institutions teach or how well they teach whatever they choose to teach. This is akin to a federal law providing that you get paid whether or not you perform the duties of your job satisfactorily or whether or not you even show up to work.

Serious, part-time adult learners have a very hard, almost

impossible time getting their noses under the federal loan tent. Those who teach these serious, mature, part-time scholars usually lack professional and social status on the faculty equal to those who drone out the same lectures to freshmen year after year.

Dave reports the demise to the United States Association of Evening Students. I am familiar with some instances in the past where the Association of Evening Students was able to persuade universities to improve their treatment of part-time students. The organization also enabled some of its members to enjoy some of the comraderie and friendship that are a major value of conventional undergraduate life. It is a pity that it is not flourishing.

I hope that ACET subscribers will take the Stewart column to the nearest copying machine and make copies for their colleagues who do not subscribe to ACET. They need to think about the message Dave Stewart has written so tellingly. Good adult educators focus on the adult learner as a complete person, Dave tells us. Getting involved in all the problems of adult learning will make you a complete adult educator.

That's the way a tired, cynical and jaded journalist sees it.

Presidents and Governors Agree on Good Intentions

The historic photo opportunity conducted by President Bush and the nation's governors at Charlottesville, VA, dealt mainly with the problems of adult ignorance by promising a variety of reforms in elementary and secondary education.

For nearly two decades this reporter has been reading the language of education conferences and much of the promises made at Charlottesville sound remarkably like good intentions he has read before.

President Bush: "Our focus must no longer be on resources. It must be on results."

Governor Clinton of Arkansas: "...we stand here before you and tell you we expect to be held personally accountable for the progress we make in moving this country to a brighter future."

Gov. Booth Gardner of Washington was less eloquent but perhaps more realistic. He said he was encouraged that limited

federal money would be applied to early childhood education and Head Start.

Most of the conference statement concerns itself with improving the education of pupils already in the pipeline but there is some recognition that there is also need for help for adults who lack the literacy skills needed to be productive members of the work force.

If, as some of us believe, there is a need for education that will enable illiterate adults to govern themselves wisely and enjoy some modest pleasures during their stay on earth, that issue was not considered important enough to be addressed at this time.

Still, the joint statement does include among its goals:

. "the functional literacy of adult Americans"

. "the level of training necessary to guarantee a competitive work force"

Adult education also was mentioned in the section calling for Uncle Sam to keep his nose out of how the states spend the federal money they get for education. The statement says: "...the Chapter I program requires that equipment purchased to provide remedial education services cannot be used for non-chapter I Institutions in areas such as adult education. Several states report that large numbers of computers purchased by federal funds are idle at night, while adult education classes that need them either do without or use scarce tax dollars to buy other equipment."

Not everyone has given up on adults. A headline in The New York Times reads: "Companies Step In Where the Schools Fail." The first paragraph says that at the huge Motorola plant outside Chicago the company is paying employees not to learn about cellular telephones or electronic circuit boards but how much a pound of grapes would cost if 2-3/4 of a pound cost $3.25. In other words the employees need to know how to reason and compute in their heads to use the new computerized equipment that Motorola is installing.

The Times takes up a lot of space recording the various programs by which profit-seeking companies provide the skills that an earlier generation of adults acquired in grade school.

Something else that adult educators might think about. The current issue of The Washington Monthly argues rather persua-

sively that many universities permit a student to graduate by completing a hodge-podge of irrelevant courses that leave him without any substantial knowledge of history or how America governs itself, without the skills to practice a vocation or profession, sometimes without even the skills to learn a vocation. Instead of a nourishing mental meal, the article argues, some students leave with a diploma after consuming nothing but appetizers and desserts for four years.

Take a look at an adult or continuing education catalog and consider what percentage of the offerings exacerbate this condition instead of ameliorating it.

It seems to this reporter that adult education should be more than training to supervise a robot or punch a data processor, and it is always a bit disappointing when another blue ribbon conference addresses the problems of education and gives short shrift to the needs of adults.

Sometimes it seems that adult and continuing educators are better at marketing courses than they are at marketing education.

Myles Horton Lived His Beliefs

(February 1990)

Many had once feared that Myles would die from a bullet to the brain fired by some segregationist "peace officer."

Myles Horton put his life on the line for his beliefs. Deputy sheriffs in the pay of nonunion mine owners, and segregationist zealots were real threats to Myles Horton. A Bill Moyers PBS documentary some years ago told of his narrow escapes.

I met Myles Horton in the '70s when we served on a civic education project conducted by the Syracuse University Research Corporation. Our plane from Syracuse arrived in Washington a few hours earlier than Horton was to meet his daughter. I took him into the Admiral's Club in the airport, where he could phone his daughter, and then went to the bar to buy him a drink. When he ordered a Jack Daniels the bartender said, "You sound like you come from Tennessee." Myles' face lit up with a smile and I was sure his wait would be a pleasant one.

Myles Horton was 84. I am proud that I got to spend a few hours with him. It's hard to put your money where your mouth is. It's harder yet to put your life where your mouth is. Adult educators can be proud that a man as wise and brave as Myles Horton served in their ranks.

Jack Crabtree Worked in the System

Several persons have called to inform me of the recent death of Arthur P. Crabtree, whom I know only by reputation. He

started his career in the midwest and was with Garrett Murphy's adult education office in the New York State public education system when he died. He worked "in the system" of public education agencies to further the cause of adult learning and was national president of the Adult education Association in 1963-64.

Cutespeak and Doublespeak

It seems appropriate to call ACET readers' attention to the following editorial from the St. Louis Post-Dispatch. We have all heard the Doublespeak at seminars and conferences and we have noticed Cutespeak in course catalogues. The majority of us—people like you and me—are far too brisk to use doublespeak and far too dignified to stoop to Cutespeak, but I am sure that all of you know someone who can benefit from reading the editorial. Especially the shameless punsters who live in the House of Tutor.

Doublespeak, Cutespeak

Language, like fire, can be used for good or for ill. Two recent studies have laid bare how people use English to obscure or to delight. Both should be taken to heart by everyone who cares about words.

William Lutz, a professor of English at Rutgers University, has tried to make sense of what he calls Doublespeak—the use of arcane language to make unclear what could easily be obvious to all. Among the worst offenders, Mr. Lutz says, are educators, who often seem unable to use three short words when five long ones will do.

To such people, for example, children who talk to themselves are engaged in "audible verbal self-reinforcement." Teachers don't test students; they "implement an evaluation program." When the State of Ohio wanted to find adults who couldn't read, it decided that "an ongoing marketing approach should be implemented to provide the outreach necessary to find the unserved adult illiterate population." Even adults who can read would have a hard time making sense out of such gibberish.

Compare that use of language with the words studied by Dennis Baron of the University of Illinois. He is a devotee of what he has termed Cutespeak—those clever phrases you wish you had

thought of first. A plumbing company in the San Francisco area, for instance, is called "A Flush Beats A Full House;" a caterer in Boston goes by the name of "Currier & Chives."

Perhaps the difference between Cutespeak and Doublespeak is that clever businesses will profit by their memorable names; educators whose words obscure instead of illuminate impress only their colleagues while they baffle everyone else. Maybe it's time for teachers to join the other side; they could start calling their schools the House of Tutor.

Parents Need Adult Education

(April 1990)

Newsweek, the national PTA and the Chrysler Corporation held a Washington press conference and put out a handsome media kit to publicize a special section in Newsweek funded by Chrysler which shows that a lot of parents cannot or won't spend much time to get involved in their children's schooling.

I can sympathize with them. Many a night when I was sipping my after-dinner coffee with my brain in neutral one of my kids would come up with questions about some subject I slept through or flunked or both. And I still twitch when I recall Dad's Morning at Nursery School when I was wearing a new chalk stripe suit for an important luncheon meeting later that day when the stern teacher said: "Nap time. Everybody curl up on the floor and that includes fathers and you in the blue suit—that means you!"

One time I asked a golfing partner, a distinguished former foreign service officer and former editorial writer for the Baltimore Sun, for an idea to wake up an audience at an adult education conference I was going to address.

"Abolish all public schools and make parents educate their children or pay tuition at some expensive private school," he replied without looking up from studying the line of his putt.

"There would be tests conducted by the FBI to make sure parents were teaching their kids," he added.

"My God," I said, "every adult I know would have to go back to school to be able to teach a third-grader, let alone teach

trigonometry and physics."

"Exactly," he said. If he hadn't been pulling a golf cart I am sure he would have put the tips of his fingers together when he said "exactly."

I never made the proposal. I am not opposed to all forms of mandatory continuing education for adults, but the idea was so simple and sensible that it scared me. Moreover I know that even though it might benefit adult education, professional educators would not like to see uncertified parents encroaching on their turf. But maybe the time has come.

Parents told the pollsters that they care deeply about their children's education and believe they are critical to their children' learning but they are unwilling or unable to get involved in their children's schools.

The press kit includes some exhortation of parents to get involved by Lee Iacocca, the head of Chrysler, and a suggestion by Dr. Ernest Boyer, Carnegie Foundation president, that companies give their workers time off with pay to spend time with their children at school.

There is also some outright adult education in the supplement kit, such as advice to parents on getting your children in the right nursery school which is as important a task as getting them in the right college.

I suspect that adults who have to attend a seminar on networking in order to be able to gossip with the person at the next desk might rush to join courses on how to behave at a PTA meeting and how to get the most out of parent's night. All this good stuff at the press conference is in the March 12 issue of Newsweek.

Retiring Rep Hawkins in Education Fight

(May 1990)

An acrimonious partisan struggle has tied up education legislation in the House Subcommittee on Elementary, Secondary and Vocational Education. The partisan battle is over a Senate-passed bill containing provisions advocated by the President and a bill sponsored by the Subcommittee Chairman, Augustus F. Hawkins of California.

Hawkins, 82, is Chairman of the House Education and Labor Committee and is the senior member of the Black Caucus. He is the author of important civil rights legislation and has also put through major laws on job training and elementary education. He has announced that he will retire at the end of this session. He is expected to be replaced by William Ford of Michigan, 20 years junior to Hawkins. Ford is regarded as a pro-labor liberal with possibly more interest in higher education affairs than Hawkins, but he will face the same huge deficit that Hawkins has faced, a deficit that makes it difficult to push through new programs or expand old ones.

The President's proposal has the public relations title of the Excellence in Education Act and some opponents say it is more PR and preamble than program. The $7 billion Democratic measure includes the Sawyer literacy provisions, initiatives to recruit and train teachers and loan forgiveness for students who become teachers.

Secretary of Education Lauro Cavazos testified that the

measure was "a ploy to sidetrack the President's bill." The senior Republican on the Subcommittee, William F. Goodling of Pennsylvania joined in the attack on the Democrats' bill and the Republicans walked out of the hearing.

LEARNERS: CUSTOMERS OR CLIENTS?

(MAY 1990)

Do you, gentle ACET reader, think of adult learners as customers or as clients?

If you think of them as customers then your job is pretty much like that of a fast food chain. You find out what the customers want and give it to them. You can do this in a broad, across-the-board way or you can look for a niche and aim at a smaller target of customers.

You can find that millions of Americans want greasy food that they are persuaded is good for their health. If you can persuade millions of hungry folks that your tastier (and greasier) potatoes will lower cholesterol and make the eater healthier, then you are going to sell a lot of potatoes, make a lot of money, and achieve your marketing objective.

If you can discover that millions of Americans long to eat their french fries with whipped cream, you can start selling and advertising that delicacy, and you will have succeeded as a niche marketer.

If you think of them as clients, then your job can be that of a minister, a lawyer, a psychiatrist or psychologist, maybe even a professional educator.

To put it another way you can be an exploiter or a counselor.

Since public institutions and businesses provide funding for a good deal of adult learning, adult educators sometimes find it expedient to cater to the wants and needs of third parties.

For example, adult teaching that meets the need of a garment factory in the Mississippi delta country may not meet the needs of citizens in that area for education on how to use their votes to get better health and learning services from their state and local governments.

An adult educator who sees these people as customers will likely provide a different service than will the adult educator who sees those people as clients.

Many of you will say that it is not as much of an "either-or" choice as I have painted it, and I think you are correct. I wrote those paragraphs in an effort to make you think about what you owe to your customers/clients.

It seems to me that over the last two decades I have heard more and more about marketing and less and less about the results of that marketing or the quality of the product. I try to measure the success of all education, not by the gross national product or total classroom hours or the salaries of teachers or the amenities in schools and colleges, but by the quality of life of our citizens and by how well we govern ourselves. It seems obvious to me that in a rapidly changing world adult learning is the key component of good self-government. I wrote "the" and not "a" on purpose. You see, I expect an awful lot from you folks who help adults to learn.

After you market them!.

We Should Know Better

(June 1990)

Of late my clip file of ugly and outrageous behavior on campus has been growing at an alarming rate. And now comes a report by the Carnegie foundation, done in collaboration with the American Council on Education, which tells me these clips were not accounts of aberrations, but were part of a pattern. The report put it this way:

"We conclude that the idyllic vision so routinely portrayed in college promotional materials often masks disturbing realities of student life. On most campuses expectations regarding the personal conduct of students are ambiguous, at best. The deep social divisions that all too often divide campuses racially and ethnically undermine the integrity of higher eduction. Sexism continues to restrict women."

The unanswered question in my mind now is whether the campus is reflecting the ugly things in our society or whether society is reflecting what our young people learned on the campus. In any event, there seems to be a limitless opportunity here for adult education to help adults achieve the collegiality that doesn't seem to exist on the campus. If educators want some guidance for these new courses I will suggest what my mother used to exclaim after reading a few of the outrages chronicle in the papers I brought home from work on the St. Louis Star-Times, "Grown-ups Ought To Know Better."

You, Too, Can Become a Senior Manager

So I managed to grow old without the help of experts, but now it is time to turn my life over to be managed by them. Or so I deduce from a catalog of seminars put out by the National Council on Aging, Inc. It offers "professionals in the field of aging" a selection of "state of the art training." And what will they be trained to do? They will be trained to manage—to manage care, to manage difficult behavior, to manage housing.

I respect the Council and the people who work there and I am sure the elderly are going to be in ever greater need of management. If you think docile people, like my wife and I, need "difficult care management" wait until the current crop of yuppies and baby boomers reaches the magic year when Social Security and Medicare kick in!

My wife and I are both working, which is atypical, but we are short of money, which is typical. Elderly folks who have a good deal more income than we do are just as short of funds as we are. It turned out that they lived in more luxury than we enjoyed in our lives as junior citizens and now that they and we are senior citizens they expect to continue the same margin in lifestyles.

I wish that more people were being trained to help the aged instead of managing them, but management is the coming skill. Soon we will all be managed by someone who is managed by someone who is managed by...

If you wish to earn your living by managing old people who are generally docile, albeit boring with their ridiculous efforts to blow up minor occurrences like World War II to the historical importance of the recent invasion of Panama, it is probably more pleasant than becoming a drug counselor or prison guard, which seem to be the other growth professions.

If you want to learn to manage tractable, quaint oldsters like me, the address of NCOA is 600 Maryland Ave., SW, West Wing 100, Washington, DC 20024. Don't start managing me until you have a certificate.

COMMISSION URGES TESTING REFORMS

(JUNE 1990)

The National Commission on Testing and Public Policy has made eight recommendations for reform in testing to make standardized testing a means of enhancing, rather than hindering the development of human talent. The report was entitled, "From Gatekeeper to Gateway, Transforming Testing in America." It summarized the results of three years of study financed by the Ford foundation.

The report realizes the need for tests but also takes note of the fact that many of us do worse in tests than we do in real-life situations.

Commission Chair, Bernard R. Gifford, Vice President of Education at Apple Computer, Inc., and Chancellor's Professor of Eduction at the University of California, said "One of the Commission's major objectives is to promote a shift in the use of tests away from their traditional role as absolute barriers to opportunity. This is much too limited a view of the role that testing ought to play in the opportunity marketplace. The chance to attend a college, or to enroll in a training program, or to secure employment should never depend entirely upon a single test performance measure."

Commission recommendations include a call for some form of regulation in the testing industry for development of more effective means to measure the credibility of institutions. "The same tests that assess the performance of an individual should not

be used to rate the schools."

Testing has become a burgeoning industry with approximately $725 million to $915 million spent annually on school testing. From 1955 to 1986 the reported dollar sales volume of tests and testing services at the elementary and secondary level grew by almost 400 percent. Reported sales (in 1989 dollars) rose from $30 million in 1955 to $100 million in 1986. NCTPP estimates actual sales volume of tests and testing services at the elementary and secondary levels to be $500 million a year.

The Kostmayer Communications media relations concern put out a well-designed and thorough packet for the press conference announcement of the Commission. As a teaser, the advance release contained a multiple-choice SMAT (Standard Media Aptitude Test) complete with #2 pencil and hard-to-read type. *ACET* readers will be happy to know that I flunked it miserably.

Caught Faking a Quote In The First Year of ACET

(August 1990)

"I don't think it will be possible for colleges of the first distinction to remain single-sex colleges and be as distinguished as they have been." —Alan W. Simpson, president of Vassar College.

"The marvel is not that American education has failed or is lacking in certain areas, but that it has achieved what it has."—*The Christian Science Monitor* as quoted in the October 1971 newsletter of the New England Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools.

Adult education's main role is to try to make up for other people's mistakes. Someone gets through 12 years of primary and secondary schools without a useful skill to contribute to society and adult education is supposed to fix that up in a few months. Someone else gets through four or five years of higher education without any employable skills so they call it adult education. The secondary schools turn off teenagers and they drop out and take to the streets. Another job for adult education! Economic pressure squeezes young people out of school; before they acquire the level of education they should (and can) reach. Well, there's adult education, so why worry? No glamour, no exciting breakthroughs, no big grants from Uncle Sam and the foundations, just plug away at correcting other people's mistakes.—Samuel C. Brightman, editor of *Adult and Continuing Education Today*, in its October 4, 1971, issue.

The quotes printed above comprised the entire back cover of the *College Board Review*, winter issue 1971-1972. The quarterly hit upon the device of printing a few quotes on the back cover to make them stand out. It was an honor to make the back cover.

When the quote appeared in *ACET* it was attributed to an unnamed adult educator. It was a compilation of several quotes I had heard from adult educators making the point that the importance of their work was not appreciated by the general public or their academic colleagues.

I was not then and am not now certain what is the main role, if any, of adult education, but I believed then and believe now that adult education cleans up a lot of other people's messes. Anyhow, I thought my fake, composite quote was provocative and so did someone at the *College Board Review*. When an editor called and asked for the name of the person who made the statement so it could be used by the *Review*, I confessed to my first, last and only sin of writing a hundred percent faked quote. I had fixed up some bad grammar and toned down some vulgar expletives in my time, but I had never before produced a paragraph from the whole cloth, as the saying goes. The editor from the *Review* liked the quote, and she said they could use it if I would agree to have it attributed to me.

I agreed. I figured it would not be considered a cardinal sin by any adult educators who might find out about it and I was certain that none of my newspaper chums read either *ACET* or the *College Board Review*.

So the quote was printed and the recognition by the College Board gave me and the struggling *Adult and Continuing Education Today* some credence and some new subscribers. And The College Board is still in business and doing well. So I guess no harm was done.

More Vintage Sam

The issue of who gets to define the problem (prescribe the remedy, administer it and pronounce the cure) also seems to be related to a suspicion I have. I think adult education is too involved with training to cope with inequity rather than attempt-

ing to teach how to end inequities. *ACET*, March 9, 1981.

Do adult educators agree with the outsiders (and some adult educators) who regard adult education merely as a component of a network of social services for life's losers? This it is. But some of us think it is also a basic necessity if we are to continue to be a nation of free people governing ourselves with justice and equity for all as our goal. Remember when words like *justice* and *equity* were in the applause lines of political speeches? *ACET*, December 28, 1981.

Crazed GED Graduate Commits Euphemism: "He told me he was going to night school," Wife Sobs! Dick, Jane and Spot Held in Porno Raid. "Learning Never Ends," Says 6-Way Bigamist.

In response to a reader's suggestion that ACET "have more short items with headlines like the newspapers seen at supermarket checkout stations." *ACET*, December 28, 1981.

Over the years I have never found an adult educator close to Malcolm Knowles in the ability to lull me into staying awake and paying attention after a heavy meal. Malcolm, do you ever wake up in the middle of the night in a cold sweat, dreaming that you are at an education conference advocating more rigid class structure, more hierarchical authority, more rote learning, etc., and everyone is applauding wildly? *ACET*, December 26, 1983.

(Malcolm replied: "No, I never wake up in the middle of the night in a cold sweat. I always have a nightcap before I go to bed." *ACET*, June 11, 1984.

Some readers have complained that this publication does not show a proper respect for workshops, "Look, stupid," wrote R. G. of Great Neck, NY, "get your heavy hands off workshops. For thousands of adult educators, workshops are the only escape from real work that they can go to on the taxpayers' money. Besides you wouldn't believe what the workshops pay me." *ACET*, April 2, 1984.

The motto of most continuing education institutions these days seems to be: "We take VISA and MasterCard." *ACET*, June 25, 1984.

We're still having fun with lifelong learning. The Millberry Union at the University of San Francisco recently ran a course on Hollywood movies. Just for the course description Susan Da, the instructor, changed her name—to Lottie Da. *ACET*, October 14, 1985.

Most of the people I hear talking about lifelong learning tend to mean learning supervised by an accredited educator, and in the back of their minds they regard this as much a key to the teacher's survival as a key to the learner's survival. *ACET*, November 25, 1985.

COMMENTS ABOUT LEARNERS' "RIGHTS"

(SEPTEMBER 1990)

I am troubled by the fact that I cannot accept David Stewart's persuasive arguments for the proposed Bill of Rights for the Adult Learner nor the bill itself, the careful distillation of the ideas of a large group of expert and dedicated adult educators.

Part of my problem has to do with the word learn. By my definition we all learn, even when we approach dotage and forget far more each day than we learn, we continue to learn something, useful or useless, right or wrong, as long as we are conscious.

Next let me agree that adults engaged in organized, purposeful study and need far more help than most of them now are given. But do they deserve to be given these "rights" ahead of the poor and the sick and the hungry who are unable to obtain the "right" to food, shelter, medical care? Should we insist on the "right" of self-actualization (whatever that is) and remain silent about those who do not have the "right" to employment? Do you enjoy rights by degrees or priority?

Should an organization, many of whose members have self-interest as purveyors of the services that are to become a "right" of everyone, be the determiner of those rights? Would the organizations that belong to Coalition of Adult Education organizations (CAEO) or the members of these organizations guarantee these rights?

I presume that CAEO does not propose to make these legal rights enforceable in a court of law by adding them to the

Constitution by the amendment process. Who, then, would decide who is "a qualified instructor who possesses appropriate subject matter knowledge?"

The proposed rights include "equal opportunity." This is a good intention and a noble phrase, but the fact is that a rather generous and prosperous United States has never been able to provide opportunity to all, let alone equal opportunity.

I have been involved in adult education for two decades. I believe that the citizens of a democracy cannot govern themselves wisely or effectively without knowledge and good will. I believe that adult education is as important as elementary, secondary and postsecondary education to the success of our nation. I also believe our nation is in greater peril from lack of knowledge and lack of good will in the electorate than at any time in my adult life. I wish that our society and our education establishment placed as much emphasis upon citizen education as they do on vocational education. I wish I could believe that the adoption of a Bill of Rights for the Adult Learner by the CAEO would make those rights a reality.

In 1976 a group of enlightened and dedicated adult educators met at Wingspread and produced what were called the Imperatives for Lifelong Learning. I am afraid that a decade and a half from now the Bill of Rights will become no more important than the Imperatives have become today. I am afraid that educators and politicians have the bad habit of thinking that writing good intentions on paper and adopting them is a solution to real life problems. I think that one small step on the ground is worth a dozen giant leaps of rhetoric.

The CAEO Board is due to take up the Bill of Rights in September and the Association for Continuing Higher Education (ACHE) has scheduled a discussion at its national conference at Miami in October. The ACHE conference is devoted to ethical and quality issues in Continuing Higher Education.

If adult educators really want to find out what adult pupils want and need, they could provide some starting help to create an association of adult learners. It should become, I suggest, a component of the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education (AAACE). Once it got going it could set some standards

and give its seal of approval. It could have its motto, "I Know Better!" on T-shirts and sell memberships over Cable TV. It could even ask the purveyors of adult education to subscribe to a code of conduct.

Watch It! You're On Home Video!

If you like "America's Funniest Home Videos," you will love old age! I bring you this revelation to encourage you to live the rest of your pre-retirement life in a way that will enable you to create a library of personal memories as lively as a James Bond movie. I also hope it will enable you to have some insight on what is distracting the elderly from paying attention when you are teaching them how to behave in their golden years.

I am assuming that the accepted learning pattern for professional educators will continue to be for children to be taught by persons too old to recall the agonies of childhood, for young adults to be taught the perils and rewards of a free market society by middle-aged savants with bifocals and tenure, and for the elderly to be taught about old age by joggers and weight lifters who have never felt an arthritic twinge in their joints or had to stop and catch their breath halfway up the mountain.

Now back to my opening sentence. Somewhere in your cranium is a little VCR that records and stores events of your life and when you are old and trying to fill out a medicare form or understand the newspaper article about the S&L crisis or remember whether some French noun is masculine or feminine, or just trying to get some sleep for God's sake, these little VCRs will kick in and take over your mind.

They go back pretty far in your life and unless you have exceptional courage, sensitivity, and enjoyed one triumph after another, that little VCR is going to replay a lot of things you would just as soon forget. From about midnight until I finally get up and take a sleeping pill, I enjoy a replay of event after event where if I had it to do over I would behave a bit differently. My videos start out in the third grade when I was sent back to spend a week in the second grade because I could not recite the alphabet.

Once in a while I have a replay of a good event like when my first son was born or when I sank a long putt for a birdie playing golf with General Bradley.

But most of my sleepless night replays are negative and anecdotal evidence indicates most of us old folks get more negative replays than positive ones.

Well, I wanted you to know this so you will, from now on, do nothing that you will not be proud and happy to see replayed on a sleepless night when you have to get up early the next morning to have a wire strung up an artery and into your heart.

These playbacks kick in during the daylight hours with increasing frequency as you get older, so you should not be astounded if some of your elderly students miss out on some of the fine points of your instruction. If your mind never drifted from the topic at hand during undergraduate lectures these VCR attacks probably will not become a serious problem in your Golden Years. But the safest course of action is never to do anything the rest of your life that you would not want a replay of when that tiny VCR in your skull kicks in at two o'clock in the morning.

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CAN THE FREE SAFETY SAVE THE DAY?

(DECEMBER 1990)

Let us mix some metaphors.

I have always thought that adult and continuing education (an unwieldy and unappetizing appellation that no marketing wizard would hang on a product today) was the free safety of our democratic society. Is it? If not, why not?

Self-government is a dangerous way to run a country. The vote of a thoughtful person counts no more than the vote of a nincompoop.

It was dangerous to enlarge the electorate during the relative calm of the 19th century. Some of our ancestors died fighting for the right to vote as free citizens.

So we have universal suffrage and millions of us do not vote. 1990 has been the year of the Little Old Lady. That's the legendary Little Old Lady who told the Gallup pollster, "I never vote. It only encourages them." Those who do not vote range from illiterates to Doctors of Philosophy.

The news media are not serving us well. Many of us have substituted the images of television for the facts of the print media. Local TV stations are cutting their news coverage to make more money by carrying syndicated entertainment. This leaves most of us at the Mercy of the TV political ads. TV political news and TV political advertising are strong on image and short on exposition. Many voters (and nonvoters) confuse the Norman Rockwell image with the reality of ugly streets in decaying cities.

The efforts of primary, secondary and postsecondary education to teach its students to become responsible and effective citizens is perfunctory if at all.

This election has produced the sleaziest exchange of tasteless personal attacks that I have ever seen or heard. Some of the media are trying to show us the truth behind those assaults but it is not an easy task and those who most easily succumb to TV bamboozlement are not likely to read the editorial and op-ed pages of a newspaper.

Occasionally someone in the academy wrings hands about this situation but the only academic I know who describes this political sickness with clinical precision is Kathleen Hall Janieson, the Dean of the Annenberg School of Communications at the University of Pennsylvania. She also describes in plain words what can be done about this epidemic of half-truths and falsehoods.

America's educational establishment owes us more. It needs to prepare its students to become good citizens. It needs to teach us how to use our ballots to create a better country for all of its citizens. Universities offer courses on how to create political spots (i.e., how to be nasty and misleading without getting caught) and economists at respected universities work on elaborate constructs to convince us the country was not living on borrowed money and borrowed time during the splashy enrichment of the rich in the last decade, and that the only imbalance and injustice in America today is reckless spending on things like Social Security, Medicare and Head Start. Better we should have leveraged buy-out loans than student loans, they tell us.

I once heard David Mathews tell a select audience of college presidents and provosts that any problem of our citizenry was a problem of our educators. The applause was minimal.

A few academics were wringing their hands over this campaign and perhaps they will do something about it. We shall see. But meanwhile we have a surly and bitter electorate that got pretty much what it wanted from Congress but doesn't want to pay for it. Citizens are in an ugly mood.

An overwhelming majority of the electorate are adults, finished with conventional classroom learning. The only way they

can be converted to more rational and effective citizenship is by adult and continuing education.

I see adult and continuing education as the free safety, the last force to stop this stampede to indifference, ignorance and malice before it is too late. That was a role that some educators hoped that adult education would fulfill back in the sixties when hope was high that we would become a learning society. Instead we have, thanks to TV, become a society of image addicts. We think we are the happy and prosperous people we see on TV who can solve any problem by going to the drug store and changing toothpaste or going to the grocery for a new oat bran cereal.

This was written on election eve. You will read it after the election. But whether your guys won or my guys won, now is the time for the free safety to get to work before TV images lure us over the cliff.

So now I have mixed my metaphors. I pray that this essay will bring a flood of letters to *ACET* and start a discussion of what adult educators can do to return us to political sanity. P.S. Readers should know that I have covered politics for the print and broadcast media. I worked for 18 years at the Democratic National Committee, engaged in a daily media duel with the Republicans. I am not an innocent writing from an ivory tower. I am a citizen who is sick at heart over what I have seen in the 1990 campaign.

Special People, Special Needs

The October issue of *Adult Learning*, the magazine of the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education (AAACE) is devoted to "adults with special learning needs."

As far as I know from my 20 years of reporting on adult learning, it is the first adult education publication to feature a drawing of a restroom door on its cover.

I applaud. I know of no more pressing adult learning need than to go to the bathroom when nature calls and nature calls adults of a certain age more often than it used to.

There are many adults of my generation and younger who did not get a fair shake from public education because they were handicapped or had special learning needs or whatever the

current euphemism is for their afflictions. I hope that adult educators will give them the help they need to enjoy the benefits of learning they missed when they were young. And I hope that all educators will accept the new requirements for facilities for the handicapped, not as burdens, but as sound investments.

To find out more about special needs and how to meet them, contact the National Association for Adults with Special Learning Needs—Dr. Boris Bogatz, President NAASLN, c/o PACEm Gallaudet University, 800 Florida Avenue NE, Washington, DC 20002 (202) 651-5044.

An Elegy for the '80s

(January 1991)

This is the dullest opening paragraph I have written in 58 years as a media journeyman.

The following "A copy," the part that is supposed to provide the background for the new facts that are about to be reported or for the proposals that are about to be advocated, is not much better. The managing editor suggested, some months ago, that it would be appropriate for me to write a column about the adult and continuing education success and failures of the '80s

Since then I have laid awake in my bed pondering the topic; it has intruded in my train of thought when I was busy at other tasks. The damn assignment has bent me all out of shape.

The problem, to put it bluntly, is that I don't think much of consequence occurred in the field of adult and continuing education during the '80s The war on illiteracy got a lot of publicity, but our elementary and secondary institutions were turning out illiterates faster than adult educators could teach people to read and write. Educators and politicians were consistently deaf to the argument that if we attacked the problem of abject poverty the problem of illiteracy might take care of itself.

There are no reliable statistics that I know of, but I would guess that the massive and sincere efforts to end illiteracy during the '80s was a case of running faster and faster in order to stay in place.

Some have said that the '80s were a decade of fast change. Yes

and no. I suppose the old Protestant work ethic—study hard and you'll get a good job when you graduate; save your money and don't buy a lot of things that you cannot pay for in cash; work hard and you will get a promotion—all of that was abandoned as our government and our society decided to borrow their way into prosperity and solvency.

The nation pretty much abandoned the old economy of taking raw materials and turning them into something useful that people could afford to buy. Mass production of goods was regarded as a good thing before the 80s. A metaphor for the success of mass manufacturing was that the workers in buggy factories walked to work or took a street car. When American autos were the best in the world, the workers who made them rode to the factory in their own cars.

Under this system the rich usually got richer, some of the middle class became wealthy and some of the poor made it into the middle class. The proportion of the poor so far down that they could not reach the first rung of the economic ladder kept getting smaller.

Not so in the 80s. The rich got richer at an amazing rate and the poor got poorer with equal speed. Many of us who started the decade in the middle class stayed middle class only by self-delusion—we pretended that we still had the comfort and security we enjoyed in earlier years.

Adult educators still talked of empowerment as their main efforts were in job training and the war on illiteracy. A skilled craftsman making $20 an hour is not greatly empowered when he has been retrained to flip hamburgers at $5 an hour. An adult who has learned to read and write has certainly been empowered if only empowered enough to reach the bottom rung of the ladder. There was no organized effort to help him on to become an effective citizen.

And what of Continuing education? As more and more universities regarded it as a way to make money rather than a way to perform a public service, courses became more and more what could be marketed and less and less what could help us to govern ourselves more wisely.

Where was higher education during this decade? One place it

was early and often was Capitol Hill where it lobbied vigorously and successfully to see that the American taxpayer was providing enough student aid funds to keep all but the most modest of colleges fat and sassy. Research that often was more help to the researcher than to the rest of us was the route to academic advancement. The professors who could teach, wanted to teach, and did teach were not given the best tables in the faculty club dining room.

Do I think anyone let us down worse than did the educational establishment and the political-business establishment (the "experts" who ramble on endlessly and pointlessly on the McNeil-Lehrer Hour are good examples of this genre)? Of course I do! The media did, particularly the news media in which I have spent my working life. They decided that profits were more important than trust and respect. This meant that they decided their primary thrust was in entertainment, not in information. I am on a cable system and at least once a week I take the channel changing gun and sample briefly what is entertaining and enlightening me on my God-knows-how-many channels. (WARNING: Do not perform this experiment if you have a queasy stomach.) I see a competition to provide the most passive entertainment, a program that can keep you looking at the screen without ever having to think.

Now, what about the adult and continuing educators I know? Hey, they're working hard and most of them still have the dream of the last decade—that lifelong learning meant that all of us, whether we had a doctorate in medieval history or a GED certificate would keep on learning as long as we lived, keeping up with the world, enabling ourselves to govern ourselves wisely. BUT, and it's a big but, they are battling every day to hang on to whatever job they have in the bureaucracy that employs them. And I know some people who are in administration, running the bureaucracy and praying God for forgiveness every night, but who would much prefer to be teaching. But administration is where the money is in public education, and most public school employees have a hard time staying in the middle class. Things haven't changed much since the twenties when my father was a principal and we were somewhat of a neighborhood curiosity because we had a piano and didn't have an auto.

To add one more paragraph of cheer and hope, the '80s were the worst years of my life. The communications media, where I served so long and proudly, seem to me to be a major—perhaps the major cause of this debacle. It would have been even worse without the efforts of adult and continuing educators, but still I am going to stay up past my bedtime on December 31 to utter one last scornful boo at the '80s

In conclusion, let me bid you to be of good cheer. Ron Gross and Dave Stewart will be along soon to boost your morale. And it is widely believed in Washington that the new Education Secretary, Lamar Alexander, cannot possibly be as bad as his last two predecessors. And perhaps our Education President, when he gets through with keeping Saddam Hussein after school to dust erasers, will actually become an Education President. Thought I wouldn't find an upbeat ending, didn't you?

In Defense of Anecdotal Evidence

(March 1991)

Anecdotal evidence gets a bum rap from educators. I'm prejudiced in its favor because my brain is stuffed with much more that I have learned from experience than from that I have learned from books with footnotes.

I possess anecdotal evidence that an awful lot of folks are never going to make it to the second paragraph after as dull a start as I have just committed. I also have anecdotal evidence that adult educators are a patient lot and may wade through several dull paragraphs in the hope of finding something useful later on. Good for you!

The pronoun I used to start the second paragraph is a turnoff. Instead of "I possess" it would have been better to say "You know from study and experience..." In extenuation, let me say that most of my working life has been spent in trade where the first person singular pronoun is a No-No for the journeyman—a special privilege reserved for star reporters or columnists. But hey, third person journalistic scriveners are first person pronouns who have friends and relatives who are also first person pronouns. The first free Americans thought the first person singular pronoun was so important they added an amendment on freedom of speech that enables any citizen to start a sentence with "I."

I was once put in my place at an education conference when I timidly noted that a description of how it felt to be old did not agree with how I, who was actually old, felt. "It's anecdotal

evidence and you are atypical," the presenter snapped dismissively.

I hope I am atypical. All of who are elderly have no greater yearning than to be atypical. Many of us pray, "Now I lay me down to sleep. I pray the Lord that I will be atypical in the morning."

Old people are walking land mines of anecdotal evidence. The young people I see at work have learned to avoid me like the Ancient Mariner. And these are dangerous times for these young associates. There is nothing like a new war to start an old man to telling about his war.

Lately I have been spending a lot of time watching the military briefings on TV. Not that I learn anything useful about the war in the Persian Gulf from these events, but they provide me with a welcome change from the violence and bloodshed that is presented on the screen under the misnomer of entertainment.

This has caused me to think about the role of anecdotal evidence in adult education. I don't think adult educators pay enough attention to the truths and untruths their students have picked up from anecdotal evidence. Most adults have undergone anecdotal evidence that does not jibe with all they hear in the classroom.

A first person singular example. In WWII I attended classes and field exercises in boot camp, at offer candidate school, and classroom and field studies at the British School of Infantry, where I was assigned while we were awaiting the Normandy invasion. I learned a great deal at each of these places, but what did the most to prepare me for wading ashore on D-Day in Normandy was anecdotal evidence.

My classmates had fought in Norway and Denmark, in France before escaping via Dunkirk, and in the desert. At mealtimes and sipping sherry before dinner I listened carefully as my classmates told tales about actual events. I stuffed me head with the assorted evidence of these anecdotes. From the day when I stepped off a landing craft at Omaha Beach until the Potsdam Conference I found myself making good use of all that anecdotal evidence. At the classes I heard Sandhurst doctrine; in the lounge I heard the lessons of actual combat.

There is a belief that any soldier who has been in combat will

come home brave and wiser. Wiser, perhaps. As to bravery I have a bit of anecdotal evidence. After I came home from Europe and was still in uniform I was flying commercially from St. Louis to Louisville. Across the aisle from me was a young Major with just about all of the combat medals except the Medal of Honor. One of the two engines on the DC 3 conked out and we turned back to the airport. I kept on reading my magazine until I noticed that the pilot with all the medals was sitting rigid in his seat, his hands white-knuckled and gripping the arms of his seat with sweat popping out of his forehead. I figured that the Major across the aisle had a lot more anecdotal evidence about situations like that than I did.

Long after the war was over I began to read some of the histories of the Normandy campaign, reconstructed from documents and old situation maps. I learned some things I had suspected but did not know at the time, and I learned a great deal more overall than I did when I was briefing the press. I learned from scholarly analysis. But the way I learned what it felt like to be in combat came from being in combat.

I think the point of what you have read is that when you are teaching an adult you must keep in your mind that his mind is crammed with first person anecdotal evidence, some of it is true, some of it false, but for most of us, all of that anecdotal evidence is stronger than what we learn from books.

Well, all of this column is anecdotal evidence and the writer of it hopes to God that he is atypical.

Recession A Boost to Adult Enrollment

(July 1991)

As the pool of applicants for colleges shrinks, many of the colleges are increasing their efforts to enroll nontraditional students. We're talking adults here, all the way from folks out of high school and working for a few years to senior citizens, studying navigation so they can decrease the cost of operating their yachts, all this as a result of the recession which is not serious because it only affects shiftless people who do not have jobs. Many of these shiftless have been shafted recently after three or more decades of working for one employer.

It is ironic, but true that many adults are going back to the classroom to get jobs that will be less interesting and less remunerative than the ones from which they have been fired.

Quite a few of these job hunters were in middle management at corporations recently involved in leveraged buyouts that were hailed by the financial press and brilliant examples of the free enterprise system at work. Now it turns out that some annual interest payments are more than the corporation's total net worth.

Some of the adult who go back to the classroom to learn about the economy in the '90s will be taught by the same professors who hailed the go-go frenzy of the '80s as the best thing since the invention of sliced bread. Economists operate under some star that keeps them perpetually employed. They operate pretty much in decade-length cycles—ten years of making erroneous predic-

tions and ten years of explaining why those predictions were wrong. The more of these cycles an economist has to his credit, the more he is respected by the wizards of Wall Street, who are, of course, the former students of these wizards at bad-guessing.

At the moment it would seem that the victims of this anomaly are going back to school to be taught by the perpetrators. But if it's good for continuing education what can I say but Hip, Hip, Hooray!

After Thoughts

This is written a week after the Board of Coalition of Adult Education Organization (CAEO) took note of my impending 80th birthday and two days after the actual event itself. Let me assure any readers younger than I am that it is discouraging to realize that you have lived four score years without being able to figure out what's going on.

I read a lot of columns in bigger and more pretentious publications than ACET and it seems to me that a lot of folks are in the same predicament.

Bill Draves was host for a luncheon of the CAEO Board to take note of my upcoming birthday. With Draves' steely stare focused on them, board members who have not agreed with me in 20 years managed to say a few kind words. There was also a book with letters from persons too clever to be trapped into a CAEO board meeting. The letter that said in better prose than I can put together what I would have liked to say about myself if I had been invited to prepare a letter came from Milton Stern, Dean of University Extension at the University of California, Berkeley. He wrote:

Dear Sam:

These festschrifty moments are sometimes difficult for the honored recipient to accept, but way deep down, I hope you believe, as do your admirers, that when the honoree deserves the honor, ceremony is necessary. The compliments you receive on this occasion are our way of keeping a torch alight in the cave. Such a ritual of paying respect has its roots in the dim days

when history was spoken, not written, and Lord knows, it doesn't take Cassandra, these days, to remind us that we may get back there all too soon.

But let's not dwell on that last. It's the vivid, pithy way you say things and write—maintaining, as you do, the steady sense that the only war we should be fighting is the war against ignorance—that make us come together on this occasion. It has brought your friends, and more than that immediate circle, together to pay you honor on this occasion. I wish I could be there with them and you, but I can only tell you I am,

There in spirit,

Milton R. Stern
Dean

It might be appropriate to note that Milton and I both served in the Army in Europe in World War II and I can say for myself (and probably for Dean Stern) that there are situations when there is no good alternative to war and that Japan and Germany created such a situation in 1941. Still I think we are on the wrong track at the present state of our war on ignorance. I feel we are fighting ignorance on how to make and use weapons of amazing sophistication and powers of devastation and neglecting the war on ignorance and how to avoid using them. But matters like that are beyond my depth and I will leave their solution to the three-piece suits that get interviewed on the McNeil-Lehrer show.

There are moments when I think that the person who teaches an adult to read and write may be contributing more to peace than the most erudite professor of foreign relations. And that lets me be proud of the adult education profession.

But I still wonder why our nation seems to believe that education of 12-year-olds will save the world from the mistakes that 50-year-olds continue to make. Make that 50 years and older. Think how much better off we would be if Saddam Hussein and George Bush had been occupying

their time with classes in square dancing last summer.

Well it is nice to be honored at a festschrifty moment. Mine inspired me to review how I and my fellow earth residents have spent the last 80 years. Things would sure be in a mess were it not for adult and continuing education.

It's a wonder that any of you are still alive, let alone me. Many happy returns!

DEAR READERS

(OCTOBER 1991)

A gentle reader, concerned that I might be extending professional courtesy to John Ohliger when he plugged his work in his column, want to know where Sam Brightman was "when we needed him." When I edited *ACET* it had a smaller circulation and I was reporting full-time on adult eduction and most of the readers had at least an acquaintanceship with me. I wrote my copy as though I were writing a personal letter to an old friend who shared my interest in adult learning.

Old timers in the field know or know of the other columnists—John Ohliger, Ron Gross and Dave Stewart. But if I were to read *ACET* today for the first time, I would ask about all four of us, "Who are these weirdos?"

Here is an incomplete answer to that question. Ron is really Ron and Bea and they keep busy writing books, giving lectures, opening their minds to new ideas and trying to do the same with his/their readers. He once put my name on the dust jacket of a book. He also put Plato on the dust jacket. Plato may be whirling in his grave over this juxtaposition, but I feel flattered. I have not had a good visit with Ron since I was in New York to be on the Donahue show three or four years ago and Ron and Bea and one of my sons had dinner together. He lives in fashionable Great Neck, Long Island, but he is very friendly and democratic.

Dave Stewart gives some conventional academic class to *ACET*. He writes scholarly books and works at One Dupont

Circle, Washington's cathedral of higher education, and dresses so conservatively that he could pass for an expert on a panel on the McNeil-Lehrer show. In my opinion he is more solid and dependable than the flighty trio of Gross, Ohliger and yours truly. Like Ron Gross he lives in a fashionable suburb—Chevy Chase, Md., I suspect he sometimes asks himself what he is doing in the company of the likes of Ron, John and Sam. Like all of the columnists except me, he has a solid academic background. He does not merely accept conventional wisdom; he creates conventional wisdom. He gives a little class to *ACET*.

He also writes books—a scholarly biography of Eduard Lindeman and a lurid expose of marketers of fake degrees. *ACET* would be a classier publication if he were a role model for his fellow columnists.

Now, at last, we come to John Ohliger. He is as sui generis as anyone I have ever met, and in 50 plus years in national politics and journalism I have met a lot of a suis. He is against mandatory continuing education. I think every adult in the nation should be given mandatory annual civic aptitude tests and those who fail should be locked up in padded cells and forced to listen to four hours of speeches by George Bush and Michael Dukakis. Those who awaken should be excused for a year from mandatory continuing education on their civic duties. Those who slumber on should be sentenced to mandatory calisthenics.

I once tried to compromise Ohliger by sending him a T-shirt inscribed, "Who is going to love you when you're old and gray?" When this failed to sway him I sent him some old brandy and some $5 cigars. He did not return these articles but continued to go his own way, fretting about ordinary folks and turning out bits of scholarly research on how adult education is treated by novelists and by movie producers and all manner of offbeat information. I hope that these paragraphs will cause Ohliger's critic to ask where is John Ohliger when we need him.

It is tribute to the broad-mindedness of Bill Draves, *ACET's* publisher and editor and a vigorous entrepreneur, a man with a sharp eye on the bottom line, that he gives each of his columnists free reign to risk canceled subscriptions and angry complaints. I can amend Joe Lisbling's famous statement that freedom of the

press belongs only to those who own one by adding "or who have Bill Draves for an editor and publisher."

Sam

P.S. In order that you not think me a toady sucking up to our editor and publisher, let me come out right now and say that I don't like his neckties.

PPS: Brightman is old for his years.

A New Dimension for Adult Ed

First it was *Modern Maturity* giving a big plug to adult education and now it's *Newsweek*. In its August 19 issue the magazine devotes two-thirds of a page to an account of how the "Mayflower Madam" is touring the country with a seminar on "how to Start and Run an Escort Service—or to be an Escort!" In a somewhat smirking story, *Newsweek* she is "redefining adult education." *Newsweek* makes a funny about the "service economy" and gives for free almost all of the advice Sydney Biddle Burrows offers in her seminar. Most of it is of little interest to adult educators of the serious stripe such as *ACET* readers but you may want to think about one bit of advice she gives. She says that all escorts going to meet a client in a hotel room should carry a briefcase so that hotel employees will recognize that she is a serious business person. I see an awful lot of ladies at adult education gatherings toting a briefcase. Maybe you will want to give that a second thought.

Are We Thinking for Ourselves— If Not, Who Is?

(November, 1991)

During my 80th summer, an organization was generous enough to honor me with a plaque for my contributions to adult education as an outsider. Some adult educators whom I admire took the occasion to say more nice things about me than I heard during all the 20 years I was involved in adult education as an outsider journalist attempting to report on it and as an adult who deeply believes more adults must learn more about a variety of things and rely on our own minds instead of TV ads and spin doctors to make judgments for us.

It is unfortunate that adult educators have chosen the phrase "lifelong learning" as their goal. All except those of us with learning disabilities of great magnitude learn something every day of our lives, regardless of whether we are taught or trained.

It is what we learn and how we use the knowledge that determines what kind of lives we live, in what kind of country. Anecdotal evidence is greatly scorned by educators, but it is the only kind I have and I do not apologize for using it.

In small town public schools, I learned to read and write, perform simple arithmetic, to recite the pledge of allegiance to the flag, and that patriotism was "my country, right or wrong." I grew up in a state which had legal segregation and I never had a real conversation with a Negro until I visited a newspaper in Nassau, in the Bahamas, and talked shop with a black man who shared my general outlook on life and seemed to be a more skilled newspa-

perman than I was. I had been taught that blacks were inferior mentally and could not be educated to perform jobs that required mental skills.

I went to good public schools and was an indifferent scholar. It did not occur to me until college that I need not accept what my teachers said as the ultimate and absolute truth. I worked at a factory between high school and college and this gave me the ammunition to challenge a doctrinaire professor who said that in America everyone had an equal chance to rise in society through hard work. On the basis of real life experience, I discovered that sometimes people who were pulled up from above rose faster than those who sought to elevate themselves by their own bootstraps.

I think it was not until college that I took courses where we were encouraged to argue with our instructors and to think for ourselves. I was in the College of Liberal Arts at Washington University and I sampled the smorgasbord of liberal arts at random. I was not a good student, but I did become the editor of the University's college humor magazine. And I discovered that I wanted to become a newspaperman.

So I enrolled at the world-respected Walter Williams Journalism School at the University of Missouri where I got a big dose of real life experience (we put out a daily newspaper for the town as a whole in competition with a privately-owned paper) and an idealistic sense of mission.

I spent a decade in newspapering, doing well enough to become the chief copy editor and assistant news editor at one city daily and a Washington correspondent for another daily by my 31st year. I was going to press conferences where I was close enough to touch Franklin Roosevelt, Winston Churchill, and General George Marshall.

I gave this up after Pearl Harbor to enlist as a private and go to boot camp for the generous salary of $21 a month. I became an officer and left the Army in 1945. During that time, I had landed on Omaha Beach in Normandy, participated in the liberation of Paris and helped the world press cover the Potsdam Conference. After the war I worked in the Federal government, returned to newspapering and in 1947 went into the field of political debate

and propaganda. I stayed there until 1965. Since then I have not had a steady and full-time job. I have lived from hand to mouth.

It is not hard to see why this life makes it impossible for me to climb inside the skin of a person who entered the campus as a freshman and stayed there long enough to obtain a doctorate and then taught on that campus and became a tenured professor. I have greatly admired some who have followed that path. But they have missed (or is escaped the better word) the experience of not knowing where your next meal is coming from or whether you will still be alive five minutes later. This uncertainty produces a different mind set than academic progress to tenure and retirement or employment in a great corporation from mail room to middle management to becoming an executive, and finally, retirement, a gold watch and a comfortable pension, with lots of time for writing letters to the editor saying there are plenty of jobs for anyone who is willing to work. The person who has lived from hand to mouth is likely to want a government that intervenes to provide universal opportunity for education, employment and health care. If a person with my beliefs has a suit that fits and frequently wears a white shirt and a necktie and shoes, he is often called a traitor to his class. Class is very important in America and many of us are not sure to what class we belong. I would place myself near the middle of the middle class economically and a bit higher in lifestyle. My wife works as an actress and not as a domestic, except on our own and our children's premises. I own a dark suit and a shabby dinner jacket, and my wife and I have worn formal attire to events in the White House.

I mention all this to explain how, although I have had a life of rich memories and have enjoyed most of the amenities of middle middle-class living, I have come to hold the opinions about elementary, secondary, post secondary and adult and continuing education, class warfare and what we know that isn't true that I plan to present in future issues. I hope it enables new readers of *ACET* to know where I'm coming from, why I believe what I believe, why I am skeptical of much conventional wisdom and why I have a habit of using prepositions to end a sentence with. (*This is the first of several articles on untruths and consequences that I believe all educators should address. The long, biographi-*

cal account is so you can know where I am coming from in the next few columns.

BEAUTIFUL DREAMS, NIGHTMARE REALITY

(DECEMBER 1991)

The advertisement reproduced on the front page is from a full-page presentation in *The New York Times* by *Money* magazine, plugging an issue on why America "is still the best country in which to live."

The rich got into psychological warfare long before American military forces did. As long as I have been paying attention to this struggle the rich have been successful in persuading the electorate that even though you may be hungry, sick and out of work, by God isn't it great to be an American and live in a country that can lick any country in the world the size of Grenada, Panama or Iraq. The ad follows a line that is heard often in political campaigns but is also, I regret to say, heard in classrooms. It is effective class warfare.

Let's ask ourselves a few questions. Would you rather be homeless, jobless and without health care in the U.S. than have a job and health care in Switzerland?

Would you rather be homeless in America than have a house of your own in Australia?

Would you rather your children went without a college education than live in Canada?

Do you thank the Lord and George Bush that you don't have to put up with the month-long holidays that are commonplace in European countries?

Are you proud when you pick up your morning paper in the

nation's capitol and realize that once again there were more murders in Washington the night before than in other world capitols?

Are you proud that our savings and loan and bank failures are bigger than those in the British Isles?

But more dreams come true in America. Do they? In the current times of rising unemployment and health care costs soaring far out of the reach of millions of Americans are the dreams really ahead of the nightmares?

Is it a dream or a nightmare when a 50-year-old college graduate loses his job at a company where he had worked for 25 years? Is it a dream or a nightmare when the company defaults on its pension and health care commitments?

Are the drug-infested slums of most American cities dreams or nightmares? Is a drive-by shooting as American and folksy as Tom Sawyer conning someone else into painting the fence?

I would invert that lead sentence to read: More dreams come true in America but unemployment is lower in Switzerland, etc. Then we can examine how many dreams come true.

Perhaps I move in matter-of-fact circles. I cannot recall a dream that came true and neither can the few random samples I asked about their dreams coming true. I had childhood fantasies. All of us did, ranging from being first in the math class to hitting the winning world series home run with the bases loaded.

Did you ever dream of becoming the associate director of adult education in Sedalia, Missouri, or the hall monitor in the Moberly, Missouri, high school? When someone achieved these positions was it really a lifelong dream come true?

Ads like the one we are discussing have helped us to accept the make-believe of television and to choose to feel good about this fantasy world instead of facing the harsh realities of life.

There is a nice commercial for GE where the fantastically expensive MRI uncovers a tiny growth which is removed and ends a mysterious loss of sight.

This particular commercial intrigues me because I am sweating out some post eye surgery problems. The reality is that the Health Maintenance Organization to which I belong would be about as likely to perform that expensive procedure on me as it

would be to send a chauffeured Rolls Royce to take me from my home to the clinic

The wrenching changes in our society that have occurred during the last 12 years have received little, if any, attention because we are distracted by the make-us-happy little fables on TV. And what keeps on happening is that the rich are getting richer and the poor are getting poorer and far more of the middle class is slipping into the ranks of the poor than is climbing into the ranks of the rich.

A zillion charts and graphs have shown this plainly, but who would look at stuff like that when you can turn on TV and watch the Swedish Bikini Team visit the lucky guy who bought the right beer?

The closest I find adult education coming to this situation is to offer courses in workplace literacy. The theory here is that America can only become competitive in the world economy when the labor force becomes smart enough to compensate for the greedy and stupid activities of high-paid, incompetent executives.

Recently the economics writer Robert J. Samuelson, not known as a bleeding heart liberal, wrote an angry column in the November 11 issue of *Newsweek*, headlined "The Boss as Welfare Cheat," describing how corporation executives award themselves huge salaries while the worker's pay is cut.

During the Yuletide we saw Scrooge, living in England where crime rates are lower, but where fewer dreams come true, going through a bad dream that does not come true but turns Scrooge into a bleeding heart liberal.

I think we've got the making of a good TV commercial here. Scrooge is about to have a lonely nightcap when he notices that there is a different beer in his refrigerator. The evil man vows to fire the kitchen help the first thing in the morning, but then decides to go ahead and drink a bottle of the strange beer. This causes the Swedish Bikini Team to slide down the chimney dressed in cute, skimpy Santa Claus costumes. They find Scrooge dead on his bed on Christmas morning, a happy smile on his face.

For adult educators living in America where more dreams come true, there is a lot to consider in this column. Like how to

become Chief-Executive-Officer-Literate and get a $1,000,000 bonus for 1991, how to dream yourself rich and watch that dream come true. What nobler role for adult education than to teach grown-ups the economic facts of life? Sort of an R.O.T.C. for class warfare.

Class Warfare (Who's Winning?)

(December 1991)

I cannot remember getting much help about the classes in American society in the classroom. Early on in grade school, I was led to believe that all Americans are born with an equal opportunity to become President of the United States, or a millionaire tycoon, or whatever you choose to be. Horatio Alger novels were popular reading for the young. A typical plot has the young orphan, working as an office boy, stopping a runaway horse and carriage containing the beautiful daughter of the owner of the company. Orphan boy and boss' daughter fall in love and office boy is promoted to first vice president and put at the front of the line to be the next head of the business. It occurred to me that if two orphans stopped a runaway carriage containing the boss' daughter, one of them might not become head of the company, no matter how much he wanted to be. There was a truth in these novels that was never pointed out by parents or teachers. People hauled up by persons above them usually go higher than those seeking to pull themselves up by their own bootstraps. My own observation is that being born rich is better than being born poor, but I knew a rich kid who used to complain, "I've had a rough life. I had to go out and inherit every penny I have to my name."

There was no nursery school or kindergarten in the public schools of Columbia, Missouri, and so I started in the first grade. The class was composed entirely of white Protestants and the

teacher knew the economic and social class of the parents of each of us. My father was principal of the high school, which meant the teacher knew my father didn't make a big salary, but which led her to assume I would go to college. I didn't realize this at the time, nor did I recognize it in St. Louis where I went from the fourth grade through high school. I went to a high school that was primarily into college preparation, but it also served some blue-collar neighborhoods.

I new realize that the fact that white-collar family kids got called on in class a lot more than the blue-collar kids was not picking on us, but trying to make us study enough to be ready for college.

It wasn't until I finished college and went to work on a newspaper that it dawned on me that there was an upper and lower and middle class and a working class and that I had not been given any realistic instruction in five years of college about class warfare in the United States. When I went to work on a newspaper in 1933, Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal was getting underway. Headlines called strikes and union organization "class warfare," whenever warfare was being conducted as it had been for years by the rich upper class against the working class. The middle class, I decided, was the innocent bystander who is usually the hapless victim of most struggles.

Many of the upper class, I decided, were either rich or members of "old families" or both. President Roosevelt, being attacked by the rich as a "traitor" to his class, was upper class on both counts. I covered his presidency briefly. It is my belief that he was sincerely trying to improve the lot of the middle class and the blue-collar class with stock market regulations, bank deposit insurance, the eight-hour day and the five-day week, and so on.

In addition to complaining that Mr. Roosevelt was a traitor to his class, the upper class warred upon working people. There was a belief in upper-class circles that the working press favored FDR. This was probably true but most publishers hated Roosevelt and ordered up editorials denouncing him. The haves were warring against the have-nots with intensity until America entered World War II> From my viewpoint (the Army), there was pretty much of a truce in class warfare during the war, except for the military's

second-class treatment of Blacks and Filipinos.

After the war ended, there was a certain amount of confusion. Veterans from working-class families got a chance for a college education because of the GI Bill of Rights (the academic elite argued that putting these chaps onto campus would ruin higher education) and the federal housing program (in which I worked for a period after I left the Army) helped to get decent housing for veterans. Some of them moved into modest single-family homes and this enraged the organizations of homebuilders and real estate agents who wanted to build mansions for those the war made rich.

Class warfare resumed with a vengeance and the upper class couldn't wait to get rid of Harry Truman.

For a time after the war, the numbers of the middle class increased and working people were able to improve their lot through unions. Then there was a time when each side won some and lost some until 1980. After that, there was a decade of the most successful attacks on the middle class and the blue-collar workers in my lifetime. In the last 12 years, the media and some segments of the education establishment have been waging the class war like crazy. And winning big!

Do you think that people making $14,000 a year are middle class? Do you think that the children of the $15,000 family have the same chance of owning a home and educating their children as do the children of the $100,000 and over group?

Should adult educators be talking about these matters with adult students? Is your primary challenge to train people to be "workplace literate" or to show them how their government has helped to bring about this massive (and I think unfair) change in American society? Should adult educators supply adult learners with the knowledge of how to do away with some of these inequalities? American educators admire Myles Horton. I admire him, too. I am proud to have met him. And I have lived and worked on the edges of Appalachia. I know firsthand that he risked his life to educate adults, and black adults especially, far more times than did many of us who saw combat in World War II. No law requires adult educators to take sides in class warfare. Journalists and educators can be neutral observers; they can be pro-establishment or anti-establishment. It is a

matter of personal choice.

A future column will deal with how politicians use the media to bamboozle the electorate. It will deal with the failure of the media establishment and the establishment to come to grips with the problems of voter ignorance and voter apathy in our spectator society.